



Farmville, Prince Edward County, Virginia
Birth Town of Samuel David Dunavant



Morganton, Burke County, North Carolina
Hometown of Samuel David Dunavant and Virginia Corpening Dunavant

Railroad Builders: The DUNAVANT FAMILY of VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA and TENNESSEE - And Related Families -

C. H. Robertson, M.Ed. * Author of *The Last Rosenwald School of Burke County, NC: An Historic Gem Recognized*

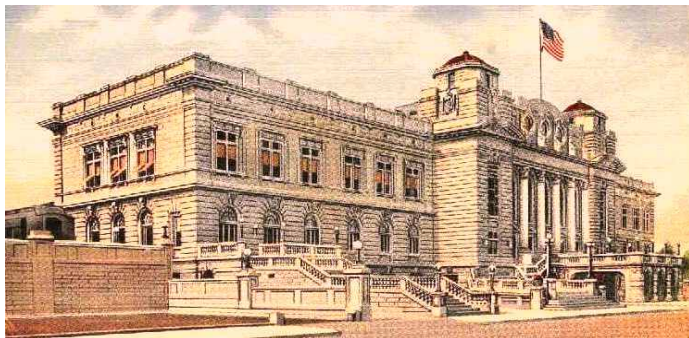
By 1856, the Dunavants had begun building Southern railroads and they would eventually be among the South's prominent railroad contractors. They migrated from Southside VA to Western NC and Memphis, TN, adding to those regions new railroads, hotels, golf clubs, dams and tunnels. For 73 years, from 1856 to 1929, the Dunavants' large-scale construction projects contributed substantially to the development of Southside VA, Western NC (Morganton, Charlotte, Statesville, Asheville and Blowing Rock), and the South. In TN, the Dunavants were instrumental in developing Memphis as a railroad hub, and their descendants would build the world's largest privately owned cotton company.

North Carolina
Society of Historians

**2015 Willie Parker Peace
History Book Award**

- and the -

**2015 Robert Bruce Cook
Family History Book Award**



Memphis, Shelby County, Tennessee
Hometown of William Pemberton Dunavant and Bettie Anderson Dunavant



Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, North Carolina
Hometown of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant

Railroad Builders: The DUNAVANT FAMILY of VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA and TENNESSEE

- And Related Families -

Dedicated to the Dunavant-Related Railroad Builders:

Samuel David Dunavant of Morganton, NC - William Pemberton Dunavant of Memphis, TN -
Henry Jackson Dunavant of Charlotte, NC - William Johnston, Mayor of Charlotte, NC -
William G. Corpening of Asheville, NC - Robert H. Godsey of Richmond, VA

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Special thanks to these major family contributors:

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Virginia Louise Robertson von Paffen ("Louise")
Bertha Jane Owen Dunavant ("Bertha Jane") -and- Samuel Jackson Dunavant II ("Jack")
Dotty Alexander -and- William Sutton Alexander II ("Sutt")
Lila Saunders Rankin ("Peaches")

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Claudia Brown and Annie McDonald, NC State Historic Preservation Office (Review of the Dunavant Nomination)

Some Families Related by Marriage to Dunavant Ancestors and Descendants:

Greece:	Korovesi
NC:	Alexander, Beaver, Corpening, DeBow, Dula, Eagles, Estes, Graham, Harris, Henkel, Horton, Johnston, Rankin, Spilman, Summerville, White
SC and NC:	Robertson
TN/AL/GA:	Cowan, Crow, Hunt, Kyle, Thaxton, Wert
VA:	Anderson, Holt, Easley, Gills, Godsey, Hopkins, Owen, Ramboa, Warriner

Research was primarily based on newspaper archives, census reports, D.A.R. research, obituaries and other published materials. All images of individuals shown herein were provided by the family contributors named above, unless otherwise noted. Contributors did not preview the entire book so any errors should be attributed to the author only.

- Introduction -

Many biographies were written about early railroad officials, but fewer recognized the railroad contractors who provided the technical expertise required to build new railways. Contractors had to focus on multiple projects to keep their workers and equipment employed so their associations with particular railroads were often shorter in duration. Fortunately, the scanning of historical newspapers and primary documents is now providing new opportunities to retrace the fascinating career paths of those who actually built our nation's infrastructure.

As a descendant, I'm pleased to present the Dunavants, a Southern family of prominent railroad builders. Although my research has emphasized the Western NC Dunavants, attention has also been given to the Dunavants of Memphis, TN, and to the ancestors of both of these branches - the Dunavants of Southside VA. Despite the Dunavants' considerable railroad building legacy, no effort had previously been made to record this family's collective accomplishments. Fortunately, their projects were newsworthy in their heyday so much of the history could be pieced together from published sources, supplemented with family photographs. Special thanks are extended to the contributors.

The Tennessee Connection

The genealogy of the Dunavant branch of Lauderdale County, TN, which also migrated from Southside VA, had already been researched by others. That branch, however, was found to be distinctly separate from the Western NC and Memphis, TN, branches. By 1861, Samuel "Sam" David Dunavant, about age 21, had moved from Southside VA to Morganton, Burke County, NC, where he would marry, raise a family, and settle for life. Neither Sam, nor any of his ancestors, nor any of his descendants, ever settled permanently in TN, but his family did have strong ties to that state. From about 1908 to 1914, Sam's son, Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant, operated "H.J. Dunavant and Co." out of Chattanooga and Knoxville, TN, but Jack then returned to his birth state of NC. The Western NC Dunavants would have visited TN since Sam had a brother in Memphis and the family of Jack's wife lived in Chattanooga.

It is now confirmed that railroad contractors Samuel David Dunavant of Morganton, NC, and William Pemberton Dunavant of Memphis, TN, were brothers and that both were born and reared in Southside VA. After working

with Sam on railroad contracts in Western NC, William became a significant developer of Memphis, TN. He served as president of the Northwestern Construction Co. headquartered there, and would invest in that city's banks and insurance firms.

History Recovered

A rare biographical article about Sam's son, Jack Dunavant, has been recovered and is provided here in full. It records, in detail, Jack's long career of building railroads. That biography is significant for several reasons. Published under the direction of the American Historical Society, it credibly documented his professional projects, and it confirmed that William was Sam's brother. Jack's biography was so detailed that its author must have had access to his personal papers - access likely provided by his widow, Louise Wert Dunavant, a published genealogist herself.

Virginian Roots Discovered

Documenting the Dunavants' Virginian ancestry was challenging. Southside VA was a rural region with less local news coverage, and in 1869, Buckingham County's courthouse burned and most of its records were lost. Despite these obstacles, the Dunavants' paternal line has been determined as far back as the American Revolution. This narrative specifies many ties between Sam and William Dunavant and the Southside Region of VA, including Nottoway (formerly Amelia) County and Buckingham County.

Sam, William and their sisters of Richmond, VA (Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey and Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins) were the children of a successful tobacco farmer, William Henry Dunavant of Enonville in Buckingham County, VA. They were the grandchildren of Pemberton Dunavant, who owned large farms in Nottoway and Buckingham Counties. And they were the great-grandchildren of William Dunavant of Nottoway County, a documented Revolutionary War Patriot, and of his wife, Susanna Pemberton Smith of Amelia County.

Southside VA was far from boring during the 1850's when Sam and William were growing up. Near Farmville, one of the world's larger railroad bridges was built. Also during their early years, Buckingham County was in the nation's most active gold mining region. The Buckingham mines were among the first in America to employ underground mining, so Sam and

William were well situated to observe digging techniques they could use later, not to mine gold but to build railways through rocky Appalachian terrain.

Other researchers have noted the descent of Pemberton Dunavant from Cornelius Dunavant and Elizabeth Hodges, who were married in VA about 1681. If their research is correct, this family arrived in the Virginia Colony during its first 75 years. Their descendants migrated from the Richmond Metro Area (Henrico and Chesterfield Counties) to Amelia County (later split into Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties), then on to Buckingham County, the geographical center of VA.

Contributions to North Carolina

The Dunavants continued to prosper as their descendants migrated from VA to NC and TN. In the mid-1800's, NC was often called the "Rip Van Winkle State" as it seemed to be asleep, uninterested in public improvements - and Western NC was its least progressive region. No navigable rivers ran westward, limiting the ability of Western North Carolinians to travel or exchange products with the rest of their state. Shortly before the Civil War, this obstacle was overcome as Sam and William Dunavant supervised the initial construction of the Western NC Railroad (WNCRR) from Salisbury to Burke Co. After the War, Sam Dunavant of Morganton and his son, Henry Jackson Dunavant of Charlotte, supervised the extension of the WNCRR (later a part of the Southern Railway) to the growing town of Asheville, NC. Sam and Jack later completed many major construction projects in NC and throughout the South, including railroads, dams, tunnels and resorts. Sam, a Town Commissioner of Morganton, also provided his hometown with a cotton mill, hotel, livery stable, and a brickyard that supplied three million bricks to build Morganton's most recognized institution, known today as Broughton Hospital.

The Dunavants' building era spanned from the Antebellum Period to the Roaring 1920's. H.J. Dunavant's wife, Louise Wert Dunavant, created the Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte and reportedly became "the only woman in the world to build and operate an 18-hole golf course". From 1929 to 1933, she and her son, Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant I, successfully created and launched a public golf course during the Great Depression. The management of William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander I would help keep the Carolina Golf Club a successful Dunavant-owned business for the next 25 years.

The Dunavants' Legacy

The Dunavant family's legacy in Western NC continues to be enjoyed by countless people. Projects still in use today include Asheville's Beaucatcher Tunnel, the Lake Lure and Lake Summit dams, Blowing Rock's Green Park - Norwood Golf Course, Charlotte's Carolina Golf Club, Morganton's Broughton Hospital, and many railroad sections merged into the Norfolk Southern Railway system. Lila Dunavant Henkel and her husband, Columbus Vance Henkel I of Statesville and Blowing Rock (a Trustee Board Member of the Appalachian State Normal School), supported the early development of today's Appalachian State University.

In TN and throughout the South, William Pemberton Dunavant also built many railroad sections still in use. His descendants in Memphis would build the world's largest privately owned cotton firm, Dunavant Enterprises. Today, the Memphian Dunavants are continuing their civic contributions to TN, as they've done for over 130 years.

The research presented here, with its compilation of historical news articles, was cited in the approved nomination for the Dunavant Cotton Mfg. Co. of Morganton, NC. My research also took a serendipitous turn: while interviewing long-term residents of rural Bridgewater in Burke County, I learned of several forgotten historic sites representing the earliest years of formal education for Burke's African-American children: the Rosenwald (Canal) School, the Betsy Pearl Corpening House, and the John C. Corpening Family Cemetery. I was able to prove the school's Rosenwald affiliation by establishing that the school's name evolved from "Bridgewater School" to "Canal School" to "Rosenwald School". (More about this project appears in my booklet, "The Last Rosenwald School of Burke County: An Historic Gem Recognized". After receiving this research in 2015, Burke's County Commissioners chose in 2016 to install at their Historic County Courthouse an historical plaque commemorating Burke's five Rosenwald schools.)

For 73 years, from 1856 to 1929, the Dunavants' large-scale construction projects contributed substantially to the early development of Southside VA, Western NC, Memphis, TN, and beyond. The Dunavant family would employ thousands to create new railways, transforming big cities and small towns, and improving the quality of life for many Southerners.

C. H. Robertson (M.Ed. - George Mason University)

Offices of the
DUNAVANT-RELATED RAILROAD BUILDERS

Southern Railway Map (1895)

Printed by the

Matthews-Northrup Co. of Buffalo, New York

(Enlarged Section Shown with Highlighting Added)

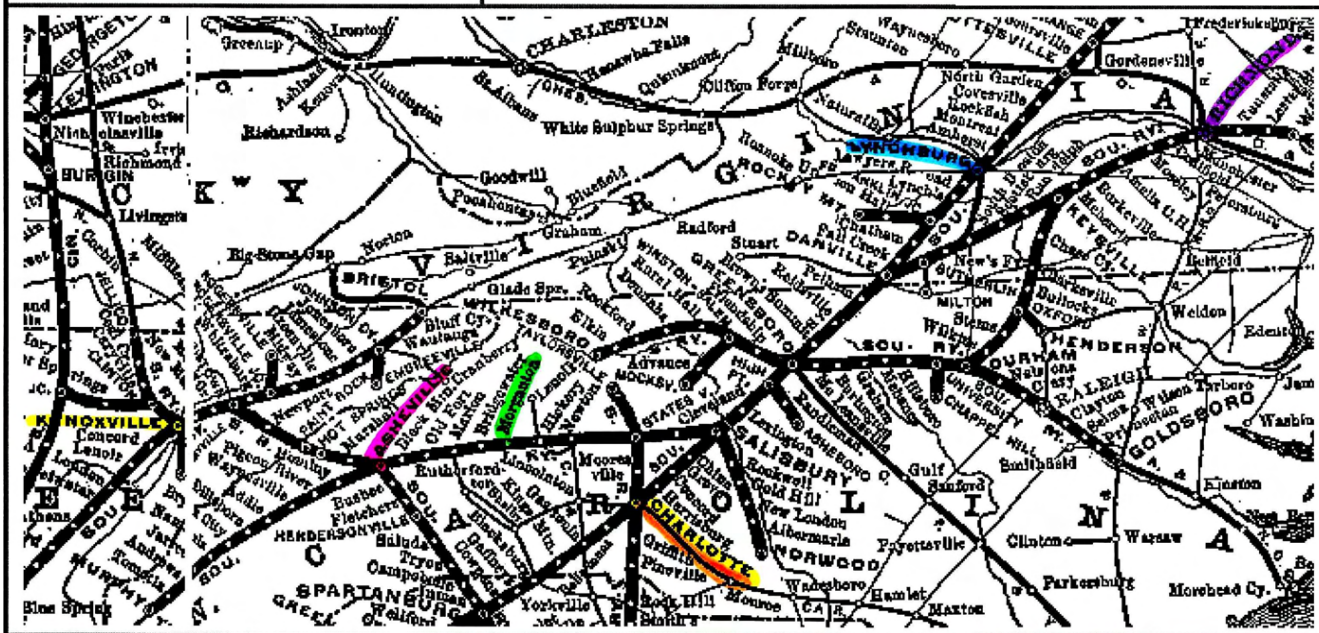
- Samuel David Dunavant (1839-1906)
- Henry Jackson Dunavant (1875-1928)
- William Galatin Corpening (1845-1915)
- William Johnston (1817-1896)

- William Pemberton Dunavant (1837-1891) *

As a young contractor, he worked in Lynchburg, VA. He later settled in Memphis, TN (not shown).

- Robert H. Godsey (1834-1889) *

* Death Preceded Map Date



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Available from Lulu Press Inc. (Author: C.H. Robertson, M.Ed.)	The publication that includes the supplemental material referenced below is entitled, " <i>Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee (Supplement: Family of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant, and Related Families)</i> ".
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CHAPTER 1

SAMUEL DAVID DUNAVANT (Railroad Contractor of Morganton, NC)

**From Southside Virginia to
Morganton, NC**

**And His Brother-In-Law:
William G. Corpening
(Railroad Contractor of Asheville, NC)**

Years: 1839-1906

Related Family: Corpening (of NC)

- All uses of "Sam" refer to Samuel David Dunavant.
- Historical newspaper articles usually referred to Samuel David Dunavant as "S.D. Dunavant".

When Samuel David Dunavant arrived in Morganton, NC, in 1860, he found a small town that was the county seat of rural Burke County. Supervising the construction of the Western NC Railroad from Salisbury to Burke County, he brought to Western NC its first east-west rail service, and to Morganton its first rail line. Burke County had little industrial development before this railroad arrived.

In the early 1880's, the Morganton brickyard of Capt. Dunavant contributed three million bricks to the construction of the Western NC Insane Asylum (later known as Broughton Hospital). The creation of this major institution escalated Morganton's growth.

In 1888, Capt. Dunavant helped to organize Morganton's first textile mill, the Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Co., serving as the mill's first president. The mill's early structures would serve Morganton for many years, later as the Alpine Cotton Mill and then as the Drexel Furniture Co.

SOME of the NC DUNAVANTS' MAJOR CONSTRUCTION PROJECTS



EAGLE HOTEL

Later Known as
the Southern Hotel
Morganton, NC
Near WNCRR Station
on South Green Street
Built 1885; Burned 1961



Some of Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Contracts:

- Western NC Railroad (Salisbury to Burke Co.; Later, Burke Co. to Asheville)
- South & Western Railroad (Predecessor of the long-lived Clinchfield Railroad)
- The Railways of Jamaica (Completed with His Son, Henry Jackson Dunavant)
- Various Southern Railway Projects (Now Known as Norfolk Southern)



DUNAVANT BRICKYARD

Located on the Morganton side of the Catawba River.
Made 3 million bricks for the W. NC Insane Asylum (Now Broughton Hospital)

Some of Samuel David Dunavant's Completed Projects in Morganton, NC

- Knoxville, Cumberland Gap and Louisville Railroad
- Charleston, Cincinnati and Chicago Railroad
- Lumber Road (Later Known as Virginia Railroad)
- Adirondack Mountains Railroad in NY
- Warrior Southern Railroad
- Mobile and Ohio Railroad
- NC and St. Louis Railroad
- Cincinnati Southern Railroad
- Southern Railway (Numerous Projects)
- Carolina and NW Railroad (Working with his Father)

Left: Some of H.J. Dunavant's Railroad Contracts
Below: Some of H.J. Dunavant's Projects in NC
Note: His wife, L.W. Dunavant, built and launched the Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte, NC.

- Carolina Crushed Stone Co. (Owner; Charlotte)
- Green Park Hotel Golf Course (Co-Owner; Blowing Rock)
- Lake Summit Dam (Henderson County)
- Lake Lure Dam (Rutherford County)
- Beaucatcher Mountain Tunnel (Asheville)

DUNAVANT COTTON MNFG. CO.

Morganton, NC
Near WNCRR Station
Burke County's First Cotton Textile Mill
Built 1888; Sold 1895
Later Operated as Alpine Cotton Mill,
then as the Drexel Furniture Co.



Henry Jackson Dunavant and
Louise Wert Dunavant



The statement below was added to the National Historic Register Nomination for the Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company of Morganton, Burke County, NC. It was prepared by Annie McDonald of the NC State Historic Preservation Office and was approved by the National Park Service on 8-11-2014:

"Born in 1839 in Farmville, Virginia, Samuel David Dunavant moved to North Carolina in 1860 to work in the railroad industry. Nine years later, he married Burke County native Virginia Corpening. The couple eventually had six children, four of whom reached maturity. Although a railroad contractor, Samuel David Dunavant engaged in other commercial activity in and around Morganton, North Carolina. His other interests included ownership of a brickyard and a livery stable and, in the late 1880s, the organization of the Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company.

Although he organized the Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company, Samuel David Dunavant's primary business concern was railroad contracting. He was involved in the organization and/or construction of several railroads, including the Western North Carolina Railroad, the South and Western Railroad (predecessor to the Clinchfield Railroad), the Lenoir and Wilson's Creek Railroad, and the Caldwell and Northern Railroad. Dunavant continued to be active in the railroad industry even after the cotton mill was in receivership and eventually sold to the Erwin family.

In addition to railroad contracting, Samuel David Dunavant was active in the local community. Although all of his elected and appointed service is not known at this time, newspaper documentation indicates that he was elected to the Town Commission of Morganton for a three-year term in 1891. Also, in 1894, he served on the five-member Burke County Pension Board."

Samuel David Dunavant (1839-1906)

**Shown with Wife, Mary "Virginia" Corpening Dunavant
Morganton, Burke Co., NC (Circa. 1870)**

(Original photo is preserved at the NC State Archives in Raleigh.)

Samuel David Dunavant

Born 1839 in Farmville, Prince Edward County, VA

Died 1906 in Morganton, Burke County, NC

Samuel David Dunavant was born in Farmville, Prince Edward County, VA - according to several obituaries. (One source, the death certificate of his son, Henry Jackson Dunavant, stated that Sam was born in Buckingham, VA. The two towns, located in neighboring counties, are less than 30 miles apart.)

Since Sam's son was named DeWitt, the question has been raised as to whether Sam's middle name may have been DeWitt - but evidence does not support this. The D.A.R. entry of his daughter, Lila Dunavant Henkel (D.A.R. Entry #63735) identified her father as Samuel David Dunavant. His tombstone clearly states "David" and it's hard to imagine that his four adult children living nearby would have allowed an incorrect inscription. (The state of Virginia did not keep birth certificates in 1839 so his name cannot be verified that way.)

In 1860, young Sam was working as a railroad contractor in Western NC. In 1861, he enlisted for Confederate service - fighting first for the NC Infantry (getting wounded in Fredericksburg, VA in 1862), then transferring to the VA Cavalry in 1863. After the War, he returned to Morganton to marry, raise a family, and reside for the rest of his life.

In 1869, at about age 30, Sam married Virginia Corpening of Burke County. Between 1875 and 1881, his children Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant, DeWitt Dunavant and Lila Dunavant were born. Son "Maurice" Virginius Dunavant was born in 1891. Sam remained close to his children. He worked with his son, Jack, on railroad contracting projects for many years. Daughter Lila frequently visited. And despite having lived in other cities, sons DeWitt and Maurice were buried near their parents in Morganton. (Their other children, who died before age two, were also buried in Burke County.)

In 1905, Sam vacationed for several weeks in Hot Springs, Arkansas. The following year, he died in Morganton of Bright's Disease, an older term for kidney inflammation. His funeral was conducted by the Reverend of Morganton's Grace Episcopal Church.

"The Morganton News-Herald"

(Full Obituary; 6-14-1906)

CAPT. S. D. DUNAVANT

Capt. S.D. Dunavant, after an illness of several weeks from Bright's disease, died at his home here last Friday afternoon.

Capt. Dunavant was a well known railroad contractor and all who knew him were his friends. It is believed that he was without an enemy. And he was an honest man - "the noblest work of God". He had lots of money in his day and lost a great deal by inability to collect from some companies with whom he contracted. He was born in Farmville, Virginia, in 1839 and came to North Carolina in 1860 to engage in railroad work. He was a brave Confederate soldier, enlisting in the Sixth North Carolina Regiment from Burke County, and afterwards being transferred to a division from his native state - Virginia. He married Miss Virginia Corpening, of Burke County, who died 16 years ago. She was a sister of Messrs. L.H. and Z.T. Corpening and Mrs. Sallie Gaither of Morganton. One daughter, Mrs. C.V. Henkel of Statesville, and three sons, Messrs. Jack, DeWitt, and Maurice Dunavant, survive.

The funeral was held from the Dunavant residence Saturday afternoon at 5 o'clock, a large number of the friends and relatives of deceased attending; and the body was laid to rest in Forest Hill Cemetery. The Rev. Walter Hughson, of the Episcopal Church, conducted the funeral.

Samuel David Dunavant: Personal Life

Farmville, Prince Edward Co., VA -and- Morganton, Burke Co., NC

"Charlotte Observer"

(Full Obituary; June 9, 1906)

CAPT. S. D. DUNAVANT DEAD

**One of the Best Known Railroad Contractors in the State
Expires at Morganton - A Native of Virginia
and Confederate Veteran**

Morganton, June 8 - Capt. S. D. Dunavant, one of the best known railroad contractors in the State, died at his home here today, following a three-weeks illness of Bright's disease.

Captain Dunavant was born in Farmville in 1839 and came to North Carolina in 1860 to superintend the construction of the western division of the Southern - then the Richmond & Danville Railroad. He remained in the State and has been closely identified with the railroad history of the western section, being engaged up to the time of his death on the construction of the new South & Western Railroad. He fought gallantly throughout the Civil War, enlisting in the Sixth North Carolina Regiment from Burke County.

He married Miss Virginia Corpening, daughter of the late Jackson Corpening, who preceded him to the grave sixteen years ago. He is survived by one daughter, Mrs. C.V. Henkel of Statesville, and three sons, Jack, who is engaged in railroad construction work in Kentucky, and Maurice and DeWitt.

Capt Dunavant was one of Morganton's best and most popular citizens and his death is sincerely mourned. The funeral and interment will take place here today.

(The obituary above was preserved by GenealogyBank.com.)

"Richmond Times Dispatch"

(Full Obituary; June 9, 1906)

CAPTAIN S. D. DUNAVANT

(Special to the Times-Dispatch)

Charlotte, N.C. June 8 - Capt. S.D. Dunavant, one of the oldest and best known railroad contractors in the State, died at Morganton today after an illness of three weeks, of Bright's disease.

He was born in Farmville, Va. in 1839, and came to North Carolina in 1860 to undertake the construction of the western division of the Southern, then the old Richmond and Danville Road, from Salisbury to Asheville.

He remained in the State and engaged in active work in his line, and at the time of his death was engaged with the new South and Western Railroad now building in this State.

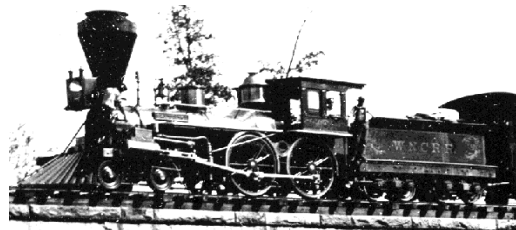
He served throughout the war in the Sixth North Carolina Regiment. He leaves a daughter and three sons. The interment will be made in Morganton tomorrow.

(The obituary above misspelled Dunavant as Dunnivant.
The obituary was preserved by GenealogyBank.com.)

Samuel David Dunavant

Despite his variety of major construction projects, Sam Dunavant always stated his profession as a "Railroad Contractor." In 1860, Sam Dunavant (about age 21) was working as a superintendant of the Western NC Railroad which was then being built between Salisbury and Burke Co.

After his Civil War service in NC and VA, he returned to make Burke Co. his home. Based in Morganton, he would continue building railroads in NC and throughout the South until his death in 1906. His career would span 46 years.



The Western NC (Later, Southern) Railroad: Sam's First Project in NC
(Matt Bumgarner Photo Collection)

REGIONAL and STATEWIDE SIGNIFICANCE of the WESTERN NC RAILROAD:

An obituary stated that Sam first left VA in 1860 to supervise work on the western division of the Southern Railroad, then known as the Richmond & Danville Railroad ("Richmond Times Dispatch"; 6-9-1906). That obituary was partly correct, but the writer confused the railroads' timelines. From 1858 to 1863, the Western NC Railroad built its first 76-mile segment from Salisbury to Burke Co. That portion was later leased to the Richmond and Danville Railroad in 1880, and to its successor, Southern Railway, in 1894. So when Sam was working on his section of the line in 1860 and 1861, he would have been under contract to the Western NC Railroad - not the Richmond & Danville Railroad. Before the War, Sam Dunavant and his brother, William, were instrumental in bringing to Western NC its first east-west rail service. As the region's first westward line, the Western NC Railroad had an enormous impact on the state's commerce, access to natural resources, and developing infrastructure. To complete this endeavor, the Dunavant brothers worked with renowned Charles F. Fisher of Rowan County, as well as Samuel McDowell Tate of Morganton.

SOUTHERN RECONSTRUCTION EFFORTS:

Sam also completed many railroad contracts outside of NC. His railroad projects extended into TN, SC, GA, and AL. These included sections of the Cumberland Gap Railroad in TN (1888) and the Southern Railway. On 4-7-1892, an article in the "Waterdown Daily Times" of NY referenced the railroad firm of "Dunavant & Corpening". Sam also did business under the name of "Dunavant, Corpening & Miller", showing his partnership with the Corpening railroad contractors related to his wife, Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant.

- Sources: (1) Articles from the "Morganton Herald" and the "Morganton Star" (1890 - 1906)
(2) NCPedia Article, "Western North Carolina Railroad", by Vincent Castano and Donald W. Kern (2006)

Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects Including the Western NC Railroad

Railroad Construction Developing Western NC's Cities and Towns

Sam Dunavant completed a number of railroad projects in the Western NC region framed by Morganton to the west, Gastonia to the east, Lenoir to the north and the South Carolina border.

Sam Dunavant's Significant Role:

Matt Bumgarner, train historian with the Tarheel Press, noted some of Sam's railroad contracts in Western NC:

- The Southern & Western Air Line between Morganton and Shelby (1890)
- The Lenoir & Wilson's Creek Railroad (1893)
- The Caldwell & Northern Railroad (1893)
- The extension of the Carolina & Northwestern Railroad from Collettsville to Mortimer and Edgemont (1904)

Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects Developing Western NC

From "Remembering Avery County: Old Tales from NC's Youngest County" (M.C. Hardy; 2007):

"In 1912, Ritter orchestrated a deal with the owners of the Caldwell and Northern Railroad. They were to extend their line in Caldwell County up Wilson's Creek, and Ritter extended a line of the Linville River Railway out of Pineola. These two lines linked up at Edgemont, a small community just over the Caldwell County line ... One of the reasons behind the extension of the line to Edgemont was so that Ritter could move his equipment to the new mill town of Mortimer."

(Note: Ritter was in the lumber business.)

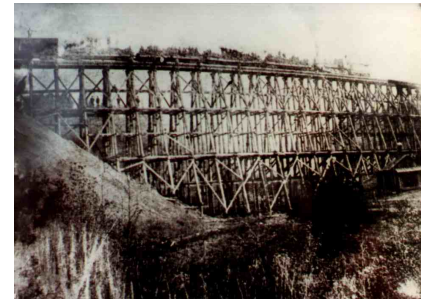
Regional Historical Significance:

From the research of Matt Bumgarner, we can identify some of the Western NC cities and towns that gained new or improved rail access from Sam Dunavant's efforts: Morganton, Shelby, Lenoir, Mortimer, Collettsville, and Edgemont.

Current research has not shown that Sam Dunavant worked on the Eastern TN & Western NC Railroad, also known as "Tweetsie". (Matt Burgarner)



Carolina & Northwestern Depot in Collettsville (Circa 1905)
(Caldwell Heritage Museum Photo Collection)



Clark Trestle in Adako, NC (Near Collettsville)
This historic photo shows the engineering challenges that Sam Dunavant encountered as he built railways in mountainous terrain. (Arnold Walker Photo Collection)

Construction of the South & Western Railroad, Predecessor of the Clinchfield Railroad

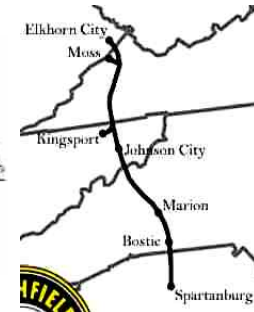
Evolution of a Long-Lived Railway

- Three C's RR => South & Western RR => Clinchfield RR => Today's CSX Transportation
- In 1888, S.D. Dunavant was supervising the construction of 85 miles of new track between Shelby and Cranberry - as part of the regional S&WRR and the proposed "Three C's" system (Charleston, SC - Cincinnati, OH - Chicago, IL).
- By 1890, most of the NC portion of the S&WRR had been built. That same year, funding for the S&WRR collapsed during a national depression.
- In 1893, S&WRR foreclosed and the new owners renamed it the Ohio River & Charleston RR.
- In 1902, George L. Carter purchased the Ohio River & Charleston RR and renamed it the Clinchfield RR.
- Between 1905 and 1909, Carter financed massive extensions, completing the Clinchfield's route from Dante, VA, to Spartanburg, SC.
- By 1925, the Clinchfield RR was very successful, operating 467 miles of track.
- Today, the former Clinchfield line is owned, and partially used, by CSX Transportation.

Sam Dunavant's Significant Role:

From "The Charlotte Democrat"; 1-20-1888. Provided by Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers (Library of Congress):

"The Railroad from Shelby to Cranberry - Capt. S.D. Dunnavant (*Dunavant*) returned from Shelby where he has recently secured an important railroad contract. He closed the contract for eighty-five miles of the Southern & Western Air-Line between Shelby and Cranberry, NC, and placed a large force of hands at work. The S&W connects with the Carolina Central at Shelby, and is intended to form a link in a great trunk line from Cincinnati to Charleston. The road is backed by a wealthy syndicate of English and New York capitalists, and Capt. Dunnavant (*Dunavant*) has instructions to push the work and will probably employ from 1000 to 1500 hands."



So we know that Sam Dunavant was awarded a large contract to grade 85 miles of new track for the S&WRR, and that in 1888, he was hiring many men to complete that contract. (Note: The successor Clinchfield route would go through Bostic, NC - 20 miles west of Shelby.) The S&WRR would become part of the Clinchfield Railroad, the last Class I railroad built in the Eastern U.S.

Regional Historical Significance:

Historian Jessica Reel Lewis stated, "The Clinchfield Railroad played an instrumental role in bringing the Industrial Revolution to Eastern Tennessee and Western North Carolina. The Clinchfield Railroad was comparable to the hub of a wagon wheel. From its hub extended the supporting spokes: the raw materials of the region, the untapped labor force eager for work, the ability to supply local businesses with raw materials, the transport of finished goods and the ability to attract new business interests to the area."

(From "George L. Carter's Clinchfield Railroad"; 2003)

Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects Developing Western NC

From "The Asheville Democrat" of Asheville, NC
(5-22-1890) (Presented by Newspapers.com):

"THE CONTRACT LET: GRADING OF THE SOUTHERN & WESTERN AIRLINE TO BE COMPLETED"

The biggest mortgage ever recorded in Burke County was placed on record last Monday. It was executed by the Southern & Western Air-Line Railroad to the Central Trust Company of New York City to secure an issue of \$1,500,000 in 40 year gold mortgage bonds. These bonds have all been floated in England by Vice President Martin, and the trust company will turn over the cash to the company as the work progresses, to the amount of one million, five hundred thousand dollars.

On Tuesday, Capt. S.D. Dunavant took the contract for grading the entire line from Ward's Gap, twenty-two miles this side of Shelby to which point the grading has already been completed, to Cranberry, the Western terminus of the line. Captain Dunavant has entered into bond the sum of \$100,000 to commence work within sixty days and to complete the grading to Morganton by January 1, 1891, and to Cranberry by January 1, 1892.

Capt Dunavant is an experienced railroad contractor who has completed some of the biggest contracts in the South, and who now has a large contract on the C.C.C.R.R. in South Carolina. He is a brother of Capt. Wm. Dunavant, the millionaire contractor of Memphis, Tenn., and to say that he has taken the contract means that things will soon be lively along the line between Ward's Gap and Morganton.

The company has contracted for enough American steel rails to lay the entire line, and track laying, they say, will commence at Shelby by July 1, the twenty-two miles already graded will be laid, and the track will be put down as fast the grading is done.

Capt. Dunavant tells us that for a mountain road, the Southern and Western will be the finest line in the South, and with connections already assured, the shortest line from the Northwest to the Atlantic by one hundred miles.

From "The Morganton Herald" of Morganton, NC
(5-27-1890) (Presented by Newspapers.com):

News Announcement Regarding the CONSTRUCTION OF THE ASHEVILLE - BILTMORE RAILROAD LINE

Capt. S.D. Dunavant has leased to Capt. V.E. McBee his railroad constructing outfit to be used in building the short line of railroad which Capt. Bee is building for Mr. Vanderbilt from the Western N.C. Railroad track near Asheville to "Biltmore," Mr. Vanderbilt's country seat. We learn that nearly one thousand hands are at work on the road which is to be completed within sixty days.



Biltmore Depot (Photo by Ken Humphreys)

Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects Developing Western NC

State-Authorized Trans-Appalachian Railway System

In 1899, the NC General Assembly approved the "Act to Incorporate the Trans-Appalachian Railway System" (Chapter 240 of "The Private Laws of the State of NC Passed by the General Assembly"):

Section 1 of the Act names the principal parties of the new corporation:

That H. L. Miller and D.W. Beach, of Washington, DC, and S.D. Dunavant, W.C. Ervin, S.T. Pearson, F.P. Tate, J.R. Ervin and W.E. Walton, of the county of Burke and state of NC, and such persons as may be associated with them, their successors and assigns, be and they are created a body politic and corporate under the name and style of "The Trans-Appalachian Railway Company"

The names in this passage represent some of Burke County's most prominent families during that era.

Section 4 of the Act further describes the authority granted to the new corporation:

That said company shall have the right to construct, and is hereby authorized and empowered to construct, operate and maintain a railroad with one or more tracks, standard gauge or otherwise, by such route as may be deemed most advantageous and expedient, from any point on the Carolina Central Railroad, at or between the town of Shelby and the town of Lincolnton, through the counties of Cleveland, Lincoln, Burke, Caldwell, Mitchell, Watauga or Ashe, or any one or more of said counties to some point on the NC and TN line, or the NC and VA line ...

Sam Dunavant's Significant Role: This was a very ambitious state-authorized project of regional scope. Capt. Dunavant's inclusion in such a project indicates that, even in his later years, his professional expertise and personal reputation were well regarded. He was listed first among Burke County's stakeholders, suggesting his relative status in gaining legislative approval.



Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects Developing Western NC

From "The Morganton Herald" of Morganton, NC (12-17-1896)
(Presented by Newspapers.com):

"CAPT. DUNAVANT IS AWARDED ANOTHER RAILROAD CONTRACT"

Capt. S.D. Dunavant returned Tuesday night from West Virginia, where a contract was awarded him by the Chesapeake and Ohio Railroad Company to build a branch road of five miles in length leading out from Deep Water, W. Va. This new road is to be built for the purpose of gaining access to coal mines in that vicinity. Capt. Dunavant's contract will amount to about \$75,000* and he will commence the work the first of January. He will employ several overseers and probably other help from Burke. We hope the Captain may meet with great success in this new undertaking.

(*Added Note: This would approximate \$2,067,736 in today's currency.)

Evolution of a Successful Line: Deepwater Railway > Tidewater Railway > Virginian Railway > Norfolk & Western Railway > Norfolk Southern Railway

Between 1896 and 1898, Col. William Page was developing the Deepwater Railway at Deepwater, WV. It extended from an interchange with the Chesapeake Ohio Railway. Col. Page formed a close alliance with Henry H. Rogers, the millionaire industrialist of Standard Oil fame. When Page and Rogers could not obtain favorable coal shipping rates from existing railroads, Rogers took matters into his own hands. In 1902, he incorporated the Tidewater Railway, placed it under Col. Page's leadership, and obtained a charter to the West Virginia border. In 1904, the Tidewater was chartered to the Virginia border. In 1907, the Deepwater Railway was acquired by its sister, Tidewater Railway, to form the Virginian Railway. Rogers financed the route's expansion. The Virginian Railway ceased to exist in 1959 when it merged into the Norfolk & Western Railroad - but much of the Deepwater route remains heavily used today by its successor, Norfolk Southern.

(Source: Deepwater District Railroad Club.)



From "The News-Herald" of
Morganton, NC (5-8-1902)
(Presented by Newspapers.com):

"BURKE RAILROADERS IN ALABAMA"

From a private letter from our friend Mr. Joe W. Avery, who is employed at Capt. S.D. Dunavant & Son's railroad works in Alabama, we quote the following:

"Capt. Dunavant and son Jack have two contracts in this State and I am at the works near Searls. Capt. D. and son have plenty of hands and are getting on nicely. I am clerking in the commissary. My health is good and I like it fine. We are working 140 to 150 hands. This includes Capt. W. G. Corpening's work. Capt. Corpening has a part of the Dunavant contract."

These are all deserving Burke men. We are glad to hear that they are doing well and shall ever rejoice in their good fortune.

Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects Developing West Virginia and Alabama

News Announcements Regarding the
CONSTRUCTION OF THE JAMAICA RAILWAY
 (From the "Morganton Herald" of Morganton, NC; Presented by Newspapers.com)

12-13-1894 - Capt. S.D. Dunavant, Jack Dunavant, Frank Hart, Lee Dobson and Alex. Dobson left Tuesday for Baltimore, where they will embark for Port Antonio, Jamaica, West Indies. Capt. Dunavant goes there to take a construction contract of two miles on a railroad across the island of Jamaica. We bid them *bon voyage* and prosperity in the land of bread fruit and Jamaica rum.

5-9-1895 - Mr. Sidney Gaither tells us that Capt. Dunavant has taken several months more work on a railroad in Jamaica, and will probably not get home before next fall. Jack Dunavant is expected home about July 1st.

6-27-1895 - Jack Dunavant arrived home yesterday from Bog Walk Jamaica, W.I. He sailed from Port Marie and landed at Baltimore after a pleasant passage. Capt. Dunavant will probably be in Jamaica till Xmas.

Port
Antonio,
Jamaica



**Samuel David Dunavant's Railroad Projects
 Developing Jamaica**



The mile-long Bog Walk Tunnel was the longest of the 43 tunnels constructed for the Jamaica Railway. This photo, circa 1904, shows a train entering the Bog Walk Tunnel. (Will Robson Photo Collection)

JAMAICA: 1899 court documents confirmed that, in 1894, Sam and his son, Jack Dunavant, worked together on a railroad in Jamaica. (Construction of "The Railways of Jamaica" had begun in 1845. It was the first railway built outside of Europe, the U.S.A., and Canada.)

Samuel David Dunavant

BRICK YARD - By 1883, Sam owned a brickyard in Morganton and he won a brick-making contract for the new Western NC Insane Asylum at Morganton, now known as Broughton Hospital (E.W. Phifer in "Burke: The History of a NC County, 1777-1920"; 1982). Another source stated: "Samuel Dunavant contracted to make and deliver three million brick for \$5.98 a thousand ... The bricks were made on the Morganton side of the Catawba River ... Slate was obtained at the Buckingham quarries, in Virginia ..." ("Southern Medicine and Surgery"; Vol. 100; 1938). (Note: Buckingham, VA, was Sam Dunavant's childhood residence.)

Articles from the "Morganton Herald" and the "Morganton Star" (1890 - 1906) also reported on Sam's other projects, listed below:

LIVERY STABLE - In 1884, Sam built a large livery stable in Morganton, which he sold in 1887.

HOTEL - In 1885, Sam built Morganton's Eagle Hotel, later renamed the Southern Hotel, near the railroad depot.

REAL ESTATE - In 1888, Sam sold to the Morganton Land and Improvement Company 25 acres, including Lovers Leap on the Catawba River. (They had planned to build a 60 room resort hotel on the site.)

COTTON MILL - From 1888 to 1895, Sam built and managed the Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company near the railroad depot.

Capt. Dunavant completed many railroad projects throughout Western NC and the South - while also giving his hometown of Morganton a brick yard, livery stable, hotel, and cotton mill. His record of accomplishments was extraordinary, and his commitment to Morganton was clear. On 12-18-1890, the "Morganton Herald" recognized Dunavant as "one of the town's liveliest and most public spirited citizens." In 1891, he was elected to a three year term as a Town Commissioner for Morganton.* When that term expired in 1894, he served in another position of public trust as a member of the Burke County Pension Board.**

(* "Morganton Herald"; 5-14-1891) (** "Morganton Herald"; 6-14-1894)



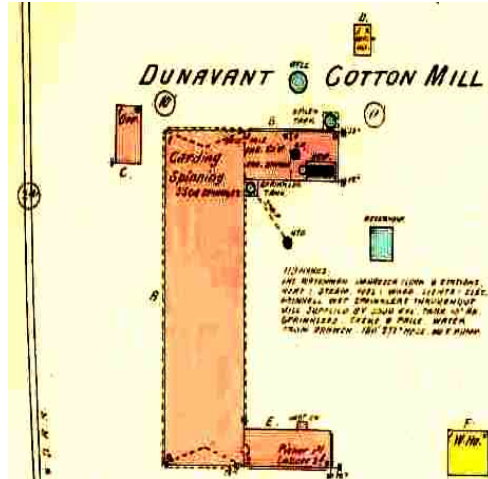
Broughton Hospital, Morganton, NC (Formerly the Western NC Insane Asylum)

Samuel David Dunavant's Large-Scale Hometown Construction Projects Morganton, Burke Co., NC

Image: This drawing appeared on the June 1894 Sanborn Map for Morganton.

Sam Dunavant had a leadership role in creating the mill and he managed it for its first seven years. During that time, the local newspaper reported numerous upgrades and expansions. In 1895, Dunavant's large railroad investments required his personal resources and he gave up the mill.

On 7-6-1895, "The Atlanta Constitution" reported, "Dunavant Cotton Mill at Morganton has been bought by ex-State Treasurer for \$125,000." (In today's currency, that would be about \$3,000,000.)



"The first textile mill to open in Burke was the Dunavant Cotton Mill in 1888 near the Morganton Railroad Depot. Modern for its day, the plant was lighted with a ten-horsepower steam engine. Within a decade, this ... mill produced new owners and a new name, Alpine Cotton Mill." ("Burke County, NC" by Larry R. Clark)

Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Co. (Historical Image)
Samuel David Dunavant (Dunavant Cotton Mfg. Co.; 1888-1895)
and William Allen Erwin (Alpine Cotton Mill No. 1; 1895-1949)
Morganton, Burke Co., NC

The Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Co., built in 1888 near the Western NC Railroad Depot, was referred to by several other names: the Morganton Cotton Manufacturing Co., Dunavant Cotton Mills, and the S.D. Dunavant Manufacturing Co. It covered 21 acres, included housing for employees, employed 125 persons, and operated day and night. As of October of 1892, it was successful and undergoing expansion.

(The above facts were compiled from articles published in the "Morganton Herald" and the "Morganton Star", 1890-1895.)

"Dunavant Cotton Mfg. Co. meets National Register Criterion A for its important role in the industrial development of Morganton, NC, ushering in the cotton textile manufacturing era in the town. It is significant as being the oldest cotton textile mill in Morganton, completed in 1888. The proposed period of significance is 1889 to 1949, the time period during which the building was in use as a cotton textile mill, first as Dunavant Cotton Mfg. Co. and, beginning in 1895, as Alpine Cotton Mill No. 1, under the ownership of William Allen Erwin of Durham, NC." (Sybil Argintar, from the Nomination Form for the National Register of Historic Places for Burke County)

"In the mid-1890's, Alpine Cotton Mill grew out of its predecessor, Dunavant Cotton Mill, and was located across from the Morganton Depot. Some 50 years later, the mill was acquired by Drexel Furniture Company, which converted the textile operation into furniture manufacturing." ("Morganton and Burke County", by H. Eugene Willard)



Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Co. (Recent Image)
Samuel David Dunavant (Dunavant Cotton Mfg. Co.; 1888-1895)
and William Allen Erwin (Alpine Cotton Mill No. 1; 1895-1949)
Morganton, Burke Co., NC

The mill, located at 109 East Fleming Dr., was added to the National Register of Historic Places for Burke Co. on 5-1-2013. Its approved nomination was completed by Sybil Argintar of Southeast Preservation Services of Asheville, NC.

In 2013, some later additions to the mill were removed by Morganton Development, with an effort to retain as much of the original structure as possible.

Ginny Erwin of Morganton Development is working on a plan to renovate the mill into commercial and residential spaces. Sam Dunavant's descendants appreciated the preservation efforts of those involved: Annie McDonald (NC State Historic Preservation Office), Ginny Erwin and Sybil Argintar.

Image: This photo appeared on the 2014 website of the realtor, Morganton Development. The long building with the dark roof (right-center of photo) was the mill's original building.





(Photo Courtesy of Burke County Library's North Carolina Room)

Samuel David Dunavant's Hotel: The Eagle (Later Southern) Hotel
Morganton, Burke Co., NC

The landmark structure which would become the Eagle (later Southern) Hotel stood on South Green Street in Morganton for 76 years. It was built in 1885, three years before completion of the nearby Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company. Dunavant's mill and hotel were both built near the railroad depot.

REGARDING the PERIOD of 1885 - 1903:

- "Burke: The History of a NC County, 1777-1938", by E.W. Phifer:
"The Eagle Hotel near the depot was built in 1885, probably by S.D. Dunavant, and was initially managed by Robert Powell. When operated in the 20th century by John Garrison, the name was changed to the Southern Hotel."
- Gale Benfield, Local History Librarian of Burke Co.:
"When built in 1885, it was called the Eagle Hotel. The builder is believed to have been S. D. Dunavant. The hotel was a large three-storied building with a porch around the second floor. It had twenty-two rooms."
- "Branson's NC Business Directory, 1896":
Gabriel Pearcy is listed as the proprietor of Morganton's Eagle Hotel.
- 1900 Sanborn Fire Ins. Co. Map (Sheet 2):
The building is identified as a dwelling.

REGARDING the PERIOD of 1903 - 1961:

- Gale Benfield, Local History Librarian of Burke County:
"When John Garrison purchased the hotel in 1903, he changed the name to the Southern Hotel. The structure was destroyed by fire on January 27, 1961. W. E. Dale owned the building at the time of the fire."
 - Maps of the Sanborn Fire Insurance Company for Morganton:
1905 Map (Sheet 4): Labeled the building as "Garrison House".
1910 Map (Sheet 4): Labeled the building as "Garrison Ho."
1924 Map (Sheet 6): Labeled the building as "Southern Hotel".
1931 Map (Sheet 10): Labeled the building as "Southern Hotel".
1931-1950 Map (Sheet 10): Preservationist Annie McDonald noted: "A building the approximate footprint and porch configuration as the photo of the hotel identifies the structure as 'Room'g' which means it was a rooming house."
 - "The Morganton News Herald" Website (Posted 1-26-2011):
The website posted an historical headline from 50 years earlier: "Fire Destroys Southern Hotel on Green Street". It identified the hotel's address as 600 South Green Street and stated that, "The building has been a landmark near the railway station for many years."
- Note: In 1884, there were four licensed distillers in Morganton. These included both Robert Powell and John Garrison. (E.W. Phifer in "Burke: The History of a NC County, 1777-1938")

Future research will need to examine any extant primary documents for the period of 1885 to 1903 to determine whether the property was initially a private residence, for the Dunavants or another family, and to determine if the Dunavant family had any involvement in the property after building it. Regardless, the research of historian E.W. Phifer, and of Burke County Local History Librarian Gale Benfield, so far indicates that, in 1885, S.D. Dunavant likely built the ornate 22-room structure near the train depot which would stand for 76 years and would welcome Morganton's guests for many decades.

Samuel David Dunavant's Hotel: The Eagle (Later Southern) Hotel
Morganton, Burke Co., NC

From "The Morganton Herald" of Morganton, NC (11-13-1890) (Presented by Newspapers.com):

**"ANOTHER LAND COMPANY:
A SOLID ORGANIZATION TO HANDLE
MORGANTON REAL ESTATE"**

The Morganton Real Estate Co. has been organized and will commence business at once handling Morganton and Burke County real estate of all kinds. The company is composed of Capt. S.D. Dunavant, President of the Dunavant Mfg. Co. of Morganton, Mr. Z.T. Corpening, one of the foremost railroad contractors of the South, Mr. J.H. Atkin, of the Old North State Land Co. of Marion, and Mr. W.H. Roberts, an experienced real estate developer of Augusta, Ga. The old Catawba Valley Club room at the corner of King and Union Streets will be fitted up as the company's office, and will be handsomely furnished and fitted up with cabinets containing specimens of the timber and minerals of the county.

The company already has control of some of the most valuable property in town, consisting of business lots and residence sites both improved and unimproved, and besides a large acreage of beautiful suburban property. Mess. Dunavant and Corpening are too well and favorably known to the people of Morganton to need any introduction at our hands. Mess. Atkin and Roberts are vouched for as gentlemen of integrity and fine business capacity, and we expect to see the company do a fine business.

Capt. S.D. Dunavant is President, and Mr. Z.T. Corpening, Secretary and Treasurer of the Company.

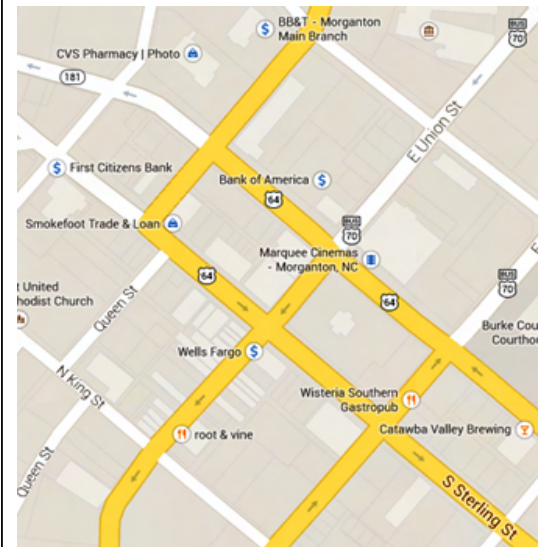
From "The News-Herald" of Morganton, NC (9-9-1915) (Newspapers.com):

**"VALUABLE
PROPERTY TO
BE SOLD"**

Penny Brothers and Thomas Brothers, of Greensboro, purchased of Mrs. C.V. Henkel and H.D. Dunavant what is known as the S.D. Dunavant property at the corner of Sterling and Queen Streets, adjoining the property of Mr. T.L. Hemphill.

The purchasers propose to sub-divide the lot and sell them a little later on for the purpose of business lots, the time of the sale of which will be advertised later. These will make very desirable business lots, which are getting to be rather scarce in Morganton.

Regarding the 9-9-1915 Announcement Shown Left: Capt. Samuel "Sam" David Dunavant died in 1906. This announcement likely referred to the sale of his property by two of his children. One of them was clearly "Mrs. C.V. Henkel" (Lila Dunavant Henkel). No "H.D. Dunavant" ever existed, so that misprint must have referred to H.J. Dunavant (Henry Jackson Dunavant). Sam's other son, Samuel "DeWitt" Dunavant, was still living in 1915 so if "S.D. Dunavant" referred to him, he was represented by his siblings.



**Samuel David Dunavant's Real Estate Interests
Morganton, Burke Co., NC**

The former Dunavant property was located in what would become Morganton's downtown banking district. (2014 Google Map)



View of the Catawba River from Morganton. Sam Dunavant's land included 184 acres bordering the Catawba River in Burke Co. In 1889, a judge valued the whole property at \$6500. Morganton's land recently averaged \$75,000 per acre. 184 acres, with riverfront exposure, would now be valued in millions of dollars.

Samuel David Dunavant & Son Bankruptcy and Financial Recovery Morganton, Burke Co., NC

Sam Dunavant's Bankruptcy: Legal Question Raised

- Many fortunes were gained and lost on the building of railroads during the 1800's. It was a risky business since one's exposure was bundled with other investors. Sam took an enormous financial loss on the "Three C's Railroad" because he could not collect on some contracts owed to him. A biography about his son, Henry Jackson Dunavant, stated that, in 1875, Sam personally lost \$90,000 on that project (or about \$1,765,475 in today's currency). Shortly before his death in 1906, Sam was working on the South & Western Railroad. ("Richmond Times Dispatch"; 6-9-1906). Ironically, that was the project that replaced the "Three C's Railroad" in NC and VA.
- In 1899, Sam was in the bankruptcy process and creditors were after his land. Before 1890, Sam had acquired a sizable tract of land on the Catawba River. In 1894, he created trusts to convey parcels of that land to his four children as each reached the age of 21.
- In 1893 and 1894, Sam's son, Jack (age 18-19) worked as a commissary clerk on railroads in PA and Caldwell Co., NC. Later in 1894, Jack joined his father in a railroad contracting project in Jamaica. Upon returning to Morganton, Jack received \$7000 for his work in Jamaica, and from that \$7000, he paid \$3246 (about \$77,904 in today's currency) against the mortgage on the family's land.
- Sam filed for bankruptcy before the mortgage was fully paid, and a legal question arose: Was Jack's mortgage payment paid from earnings that were his own, suggesting he had a legal interest in the land separate from his father? Or given his minor age when his money was earned, did Jack's Jamaican earnings legally belong to his father? This was no small question: It would determine whether Jack's portion of the land could be seized by Sam's creditors.

H.J. Dunavant's Legal and Financial Victory

- On September 15, 1899, Judge H.G. Ewart, of the Federal Court of the Western District of NC, issued a decision involving the Dunavants' land on the Catawba River. Disagreeing with legal precedents, Judge Ewart decided as follows: "It appears from the evidence in this case that the money invested in the purchase of land in controversy was the money of young (Jack) Dunavant, and was used by him in good faith, and with no purpose or intention of defrauding the creditors of S.D. Dunavant ... The profits accruing to him as a partner (receiving one-fourth of the Jamaican contract) belonged to him, and could be used in any manner he saw fit ... His earnings and profits were his own." (Adapted from the "Federal Reporter", 1899 Ed. by R. Desty and J.W. Goodwin). Young Jack Dunavant thereby enjoyed an important legal victory that separated his finances from those of his father. His good financial standing allowed him to continue his own successful contracting career.

Sam Dunavant's Professional and Financial Recovery

- Sam's obituaries in 1906 (printed in Morganton, Charlotte, and Richmond newspapers) showed that he was actively building railroads until his final weeks of illness. He remained professionally active and highly regarded as a railroad contractor.
- A review of Sam's probate file showed that Avery & Ervin of Morganton handled his estate, and that C.V. Henkel acted as the estate administrator. After Sam's debts were paid and his stocks liquidated, \$14, 173 was distributed equally among his four children. (Maurice Dunavant was still of minor age so his aunt, Sallie Gaither, represented him during probate.) In today's currency, \$14, 173 would have approximated \$363,217, showing that Sam had recovered financially in his later years.

**Statement Regarding the Historic Contributions of
SAMUEL DAVID DUNAVANT**

to Morganton, Western NC, and the Southern Reconstruction

"The Charlotte Observer" (6-9-1906) stated, "Captain Dunavant was born in Farmville (VA) in 1839 and came to NC in 1860 to superintend the construction of the western division of the Southern..." In 1860 and 1861, Sam and his brother, William Pemberton Dunavant, were both supervising the construction of the Western NC Railroad (later known as Southern Railway) between Salisbury and Burke County. As the state's first rail link to Western NC, this railroad had an enormous impact on the state's commerce, access to natural resources, and developing infrastructure.

For 46 years (1860-1906), Sam worked as a railroad contractor, completing many projects in Western NC, throughout the South, and in Jamaica. His projects developed many Western NC cities and towns, and included a large contract for the South & Western Railroad, predecessor of the Clinchfield Railroad - the last Class I railroad built in the Eastern U.S.

After serving in the Civil War, Sam returned to Morganton and became a developer of that city. By 1883, his Morganton brickyard would supply 3 million bricks for the construction of the Western NC Insane Asylum (later Broughton Hospital). In 1884, he built a livery stable. In 1885, he built the Eagle (later Southern) Hotel which welcomed guests near the Morganton Depot for 76 years until it perished in a fire in 1961. In 1888, he founded the Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company (later Alpine Cotton Mill), and managed the mill for its first seven years (1888-1895), making many improvements.

On 12-18-1890, the "Morganton Herald" recognized Dunavant as "one of the town's liveliest and most public spirited citizens." In 1891, he was elected to a three year term as a Town Commissioner for Morganton. When that term expired in 1894, he served in another position of public trust as a member of the Burke County Pension Board.

Samuel David Dunavant died in 1906, and his funeral was conducted by the Reverend of Morganton's Grace Episcopal Church. The "Charlotte Observer" (6-9-1906) noted that he had been "closely identified with the railroad history of the western section." And the "Richmond Times Dispatch" (6-9-1906) recognized him as "one of the oldest and best known railroad contractors in the State". Railroads, textiles and hotels were key to the development of Western NC, and Sam was instrumental in bringing all of those to Burke County. Locally, the "Morganton News-Herald" (6-14-1906) remembered Sam's character: "It is believed that he was without an enemy. And he was an honest man - the noblest work of God."

**Historical Recognition of Sam Dunavant and the
Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company**

A detailed history of Morganton's Dunavant Cotton Mfg. Co., later known as the Alpine Cotton Mill, can be found in the mill's nomination form. The mill's survey was commissioned by Ginny Erwin of Morganton Development and the nomination was prepared by Sybil Argintar of Southeastern Preservation Services. That nomination was approved by the National Park Service and, on 5-1-2013, the mill was added to the National Register of Historic Places for Burke Co., NC.

As additional documentation for the nomination, the National Park Service approved a statement on 8-11-2014 to recognize Sam Dunavant's other contributions to Morganton, Burke Co., and Western NC.

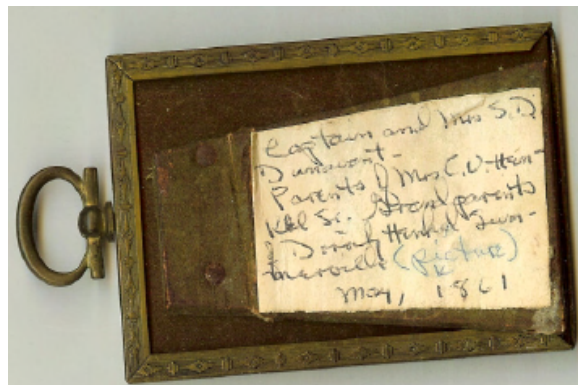
In 1905, the year preceding Capt. Dunavant's death, it was reported that he vacationed at Warm Springs, Arkansas. This historical postcard showed one of the many hotels of this famous Southern resort, the Arlington Hotel.



**Historic Contributions of
Samuel David Dunavant
Morganton, Burke Co., NC**



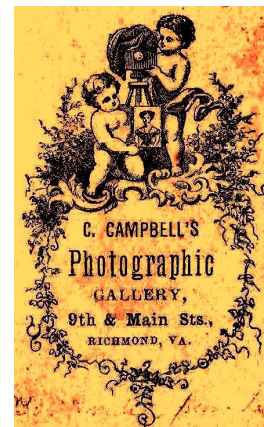
**Samuel David Dunavant
with Wife,
Mary "Virginia" Corpening
Dunavant
Morganton, Burke Co., NC**



Above Center: Frame Backing Notation for Left Photo:

"Captain and Mrs. S.D. Dunavant, Parents of Mrs. C.V. Henkel, Sr.,
Grandparents of Dorothy Henkel Summerville, May, 1861."

(Photo courtesy of Lila "Peaches" Saunders Rankin, a descendant of Lila Dunavant and C.V. Henkel, I.)



Above Right: Studio Logo on Back of Left Photo (The studio was located in Richmond, VA.)

The date attributed to this photo ("May, 1861") was probably incorrect. On 5-20-1861, NC joined the Confederacy. On 5-28-1861, Sam Dunavant enlisted in Mecklenburg County with the 6th Regiment of the NC Infantry (Company E). Mary Virginia Corpening, born in 1846, would have only been about age 15 that year. The "Southern Christian Advocate, 1868-78" recorded the following: "Mr. Samuel Duvant of Virginia to Miss Virginia Corpening of Burk, NC by Rev. J. R. Griffith on February 10, 1869 in Burk co, NC." (Entry copied for GenealogyTrails.com by Marla Snow.) The Colonial Dames of NC also recorded their marriage year as 1869. It seems unlikely that a couple of their era would have posed for a portrait before marriage.

Ownership of this photo reportedly descended as follows: From Lila Dunavant Henkel (daughter of photo's subjects) to her daughter (Dorothy Henkel Summerville), to her daughter (Susan Summerville Shriver), to her great-niece (Lila "Peaches" Saunders Rankin), to the author (C. H. Robertson), and then to its final home, the NC State Archive in Raleigh.



"Samuel" David
Dunavant



Mary "Virginia" Corpening
Dunavant

Forest Hill Cemetery in Morganton, Burke County, NC

Abram Corpening's family members were early settlers of Burke Co. - and their homestead was located near the Rutherford estate, "Bridgewater", west of Morganton. The Corpening tract was located near the point where the Linville River flows into the Catawba River, and their land bordered the Linville River.

Sam Dunavant's wife, Virginia Corpening, apparently lived in Western NC her entire life (1846-1891). She was born in Caldwell Co. but had lasting ties to Burke Co. Her parents and grandparents were buried in the Abram Corpening Family Cemetery, near Bridgewater, in Burke Co. Her two young children, Lorena I. and Ludwell J. Dunavant, were buried there as well. (Tombstones identified their parents as "S.D and M.V. Dunavant".) Near the family cemetery, the foundation of the Corpening farmhouse is still visible. Deeds show that Sam completed a number of land transactions near Bridgewater; he may have kept a home there too.

Prior to 1890, a bankruptcy court record showed that Sam owned a 184 acre farm on the Catawba River. Although Sam presumably lost that land to creditors, his son, Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant, may have retained a portion. (The Federal Court of the Western District of NC decided that Jack's financial interest in the farm was separate from that of his father.)

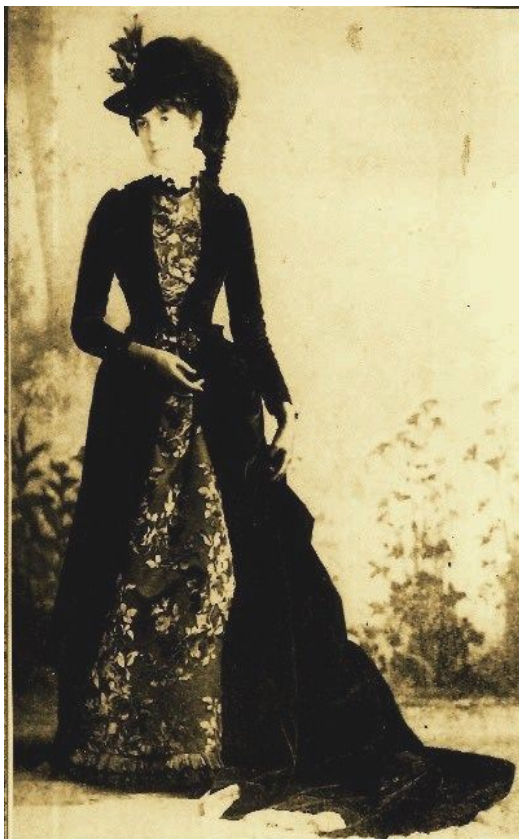
Between 1888 and 1895, Sam built and managed the Dunavant Cotton Mnf. Co. in Morganton so we'd suspect that he lived in or near town during that period. The 1900 U.S. Census documented his residence in "Morganton Township" with his three sons and his sister-in-law, Sallie "Mrs. B.S." Gaither. At that time, Mrs. Gaither was a widow and she still owned the Gaither House, so they may have all been living in her historic home. Originally located on West Union Street, the Gaither House was moved to its current location on North Anderson Street in the 1930's.

In 1901, ten years after his wife's death, we know that Sam kept a farm near Morganton. On 5-14-1901, "The Landmark" reported: "Severe hailstorms, accompanied by wind and lightening, prevailed in Burke for three days last week. On the fine farms of Miles Edmonson and Capt. Dunavant, near Morganton, the wheat crops were entirely destroyed. Hail that fell Wednesday was still drifted on the Dunavant farm at noon Thursday to a depth of ten inches."

Although Bridgewater and Morganton were about 10 miles apart, commuting may have been possible. By the 1890's, the Southern Railway had stations in both Bridgewater and Morganton.

We know that, in 1900, Sam Dunavant and his family resided in Morganton Township with Sallie Gaither. And we know that, in 1901, he had a farm near Morganton - quite possibly at the old Corpening homestead of Bridgewater.

Homes of Samuel David Dunavant -and- Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant Bridgewater and Morganton, Burke Co., NC



- Mary "Virginia" Corpening was born 1846 in Caldwell Co., NC, to Confederate Colonel David Jackson "Linville Jack" Corpening and Jane "Eliza" Horton. She survived the Civil War.
- She was a granddaughter of Abram Corpening (1776-1847) and Letecia "Letta" Estes, whose homestead was near Bridgewater. She was a great-granddaughter of early Burke Co. settlers, "Albert" Abraham Corpening (1747-1827) of the Netherlands and Barbara Propst of PA.
- In 1869, Virginia married Sam Dunavant, who had moved from VA to Morganton, NC.
- She died in 1891 shortly after giving birth to Maurice Virginius Dunavant. This was stated in Maurice's obituary in the "Statesville Record & Landmark" (7-27-1960). An announcement of her death appeared in the "Morganton Herald" (2-5-1891): "Our community was inexpressibly shocked last Friday night at the announcement of the sudden death of Mrs. S.D. Dunavant. Mrs. Dunavant was a daughter of the late Jackson Corpening, of Linville, and was a sister of Mrs. B.S. Gaither and of our townsmen, Mess. Z.T., W.G., and L.H. Corpening. An infant only a few hours old survives her. Her pastor furnishes an obituary notice which is published elsewhere."
- Virginia's sister, Sallie Corpening "Mrs. B.S" Gaither, also lived in Burke County. After Virginia's death, Sallie provided care for Virginia's children.

Notes Regarding Son Samuel "DeWitt" Dunavant: In 1895, DeWitt attended the Barnes School in Lenoir ("Morganton Herald"; 9-5-1895). DeWitt died in 1941 at age 60. A funeral notice ("Statesville Landmark"; 3-17-1941) stated that he was struck by an automobile while crossing a street in Hickory. The next day, he died at Hickory's Richard Baker Hospital. His death certificate stated that he was single and had lived in Hickory, Catawba County, for 20 years. His obituary listed no children. The spelling of "DeWitt" was used on his tombstone in Morganton. (The name DeWitt was associated with Wm. Henry Dunavant's family in Virginia.)

Notes Regarding Her Family's Burials: Virginia and Sam were interred at Morganton's Forest Hill Cemetery, along with two sons, Maurice Virginius Dunavant and Samuel DeWitt Dunavant. Another son, Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant, was buried with his wife Louise Wert Dunavant, his daughter Virginia, and his sister-in-law, Aubin Lee Wert, in the Dunavant mausoleum at Charlotte's Elmwood Cemetery. Virginia and Sam's daughter, Lila Dunavant Henkel, was buried in the Henkel family plot at Statesville's Oakwood Cemetery. Four of Virginia and Sam's children apparently died before age two. Confirmed children Lorena and Ludwell Dunavant were both buried in Bridgewater's Corpening Family Cemetery. Two children interred at Morganton's Forest Hill Cemetery, Joses and William P. "Willie" Dunavant, are assumed to have also been children of S.D. and M.V. Dunavant.

Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant
Wife of Samuel David Dunavant
 Caldwell Co. (Birthplace) and Burke Co., NC

Sallie Corpening Gaither was the second wife of Burgess Sidney Gaither I, the sister of Virginia Corpening Dunavant, and Sam Dunavant's sister-in-law. In 1880, the U.S. Census showed Mrs. Gaither living with her husband, B.S. Gaither I, and their son, Sidney (B.S. Gaither II), in Morganton. They lived in what is now known as Morganton's Gaither House.

Burke County was Sam Dunavant's primary residence for 46 years. His exact residences during that period are still under review, but we have some clues as to where he may have spent his later years. The National Register Application for the Gaither House (dated 1-19-1976) stated that Mrs. Gaither, a widow after 1892, owned the house until she died in 1911. The 1900 U.S. Census showed Sam living in Morganton Township with his sister-in-law, Sallie Corpening Gaither, and his sons "Henry" (later known by his middle name of Jack), DeWitt, and "Morris" (Maurice). It therefore seems likely that, in 1900, Sallie, Sam and his sons were living together in the Gaither House. (Sam's daughter, Lila, had married in 1898.)

Sallie remained close to her nephews and brother-in-law until her death in 1911. According to probate records, she helped with Sam's funeral arrangements and represented minor Maurice's probate interests. Regardless of whether they lived together, the obituary shown at right indicates that Mrs. Gaither served as a second mother to her sister's children so the Dunavants would have visited her home often.

NC State Senator B.S. Gaither I (1807-1892) was buried in Morganton's First Presbyterian Church Cemetery. His second wife, Sallie Corpening Gaither (1850-1911) was buried in Morganton's Forest Hill Cemetery - as were the Dunavant family members that she helped to rear, following her sister's death.

Their son, B.S. Gaither II (1872-1942) was buried at Morganton's Grace Episcopal Church Cemetery.

**Sarah "Sallie" F. Corpening
Gaither (1850 - 1911)**
**Caregiver of the Children of Her
Brother-In-Law and Sister,
Sam and Virginia Corpening Dunavant**
Morganton, Burke Co., NC



From "The News-Herald", Morganton, NC, 9-14-1911:

"MRS. SALLIE GAITHER DEAD"

The announcement in Morganton on last Sunday, the 10th inst., that Mrs. Sallie Gaither had died that morning was a source of deep regret to her many friends and relatives here.

She had been spending the summer at Blowing Rock with her niece, Mrs. Vance Henkel, was taken suddenly sick and at once removed to a sanatorium in Lenoir, where after a few days she passed to the great beyond. Her son, B.S. Gaither, and her nephew and niece, Mr. and Mrs. Vance Henkel, were with her till the end.

She was the daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Jackson Corpening and in her early life was married to the late Hon. B.S. Gaither, one of Burke's most distinguished sons.

She was 61 years of age on Tuesday, Sept. 5th, and apparently in good health the day before she was taken sick.

When her elder sister, Mr. S.D. Dunavant, died she took charge of her three children and was a mother to them in kindness and good works. Her life with them was a labor of love. For the past few years, she has spent much of her time in Statesville with Mrs. Henkel, who in large measure repaid in love and kindness what her aunt had sacrificed for her and her brothers in their young days.

Her life has been spent almost entirely in Morganton, and the profusion of flowers and tender tears at the funeral service were more eloquent of the esteem of this community than pen or tongue could express. She was one of the kindest, most unselfish of women and was as gentle as she was tender. No unkind word escaped her lips, no bitterness found lodgment in her heart.

Her son was to her the incarnation of all the virtues and she loved him as only a mother's heart could love.

A good wife, a devoted mother, a loyal friend, a faithful member of the Presbyterian church, she has passed from temporal shadows to a sweeter and sunnier clime. Peace, sweet peace, be unto her.

The services were conducted by the Rev. C.A. Monroe, of Hickory, and the Rev. C.E. Raynal, of Statesville.

FRIEND.

Adapted from the 1986 article of T. Harry Gattton, entitled, "Gaither, Burgess Sidney"

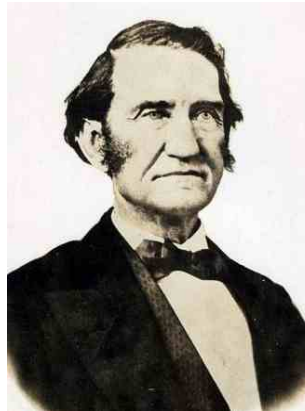
Burgess Sidney Gaither, lawyer, solicitor, speaker of the NC Senate, member of the Confederate States Congress, and superintendent of the U.S. Mint at Charlotte, was born near Turnersburg in Iredell Co. He was the eighth son of Burgess and Amelia Martin Gaither. His father represented Iredell in the House of Commons each year from 1796 through 1801. The Gaithers descended from a distinguished Maryland family that traced its ancestry to Jamestown, VA.

At age twenty-eight, he was elected to represent Burke in the Constitutional Convention of 1835 in Raleigh. In 1840-41 he represented Burke Co. in the state senate. In 1841, President John Tyler appointed Gaither superintendant of the U.S. Mint in Charlotte, and he stayed in that post until 1843. He was reelected senator from Burke in 1844 and served that year as speaker. He served in the House of Commons in 1852 and in the state senate in 1860-61.

Gaither was elected to the first Confederate States Congress from the Ninth District and qualified in 1862, representing Alexander, Alleghany, Ashe, Burke, Caldwell, Davie, Iredell, Surry, Wilkes, and Yadkin counties. Easily reelected two years later to the Second Confederate Congress, he qualified in 1864 and served to the end of the Confederacy in 1865.

Gaither married twice. His first wife was Elizabeth Sharpe Erwin, of Morganton, whom he married in 1830 and who died in 1839. The children by his first marriage were two sons, William and Alfred Haywood, and a daughter, Delia Emma, who married Dr. R. T. Pearson of Morganton. Later he married Sarah F. Corpening by whom he had a son, Burgess Sidney II. He practiced law in Morganton until his death.

Added Note: Mr. Gattton identified B.S. Gaither's second wife as "Sarah F. Corpening". Her gravestone, located at Morganton's Forest Hill Cemetery, reads "Sallie Corpening - Wife of B.S. Gaither - Sep 5 1850 - Sep 10 1911". Their son, B.S. Gaither II, was born in 1872.



Center Top:

Photo Accession # 1914.347.16 archived at the NC Museum of History in Raleigh.

Center Bottom: From the Family Collection of Lila "Peaches" Saunders Rankin (Undated) (Descendant of Lila Dunavant Henkel)

Above: Section of Gravestone at the First Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Morganton, NC

**Burgess Sidney Gaither I
(1807 - 1892)
Speaker of the NC Senate
Brother-In-Law of
Virginia Corpening Dunavant
Morganton, Burke Co., NC**

The Gaither House in Morganton takes its name from Burgess Sidney Gaither I (1807-1892). The historic nomination for the Gaither House gave this statement of significance:

"The Gaither House is an impressive and well-preserved Greek Revival house, of imposing character despite its one-story height. It was the home of Burgess S. Gaither, a Whig attorney long prominent in local and state political activities, serving as Speaker of the State Senate, Superintendent of the Charlotte Mint, a delegate to the state's 1835 constitutional convention and the Confederate States Congress."

More information regarding this house can be read in the Gaither House Nomination Form (Burke Co., NC) completed in 1976.

The Greek Revival home shown here was probably commissioned by Mr. Gaither and built in the 1840's. After Mrs. Gaither died in 1911, the house went to her son, B.S. "Sid" Gaither II, and was moved to 102 N. Anderson St. sometime between 1933 and 1936.

Laura Powe Ervin, wife of Samuel James Ervin, saved the Gaither House by moving it from W. Union St. to N. Anderson St.



This information regarding the house relocation was provided by Dottie Ervin (a descendant of Laura Powe Ervin) who currently resides in Morganton and was formerly a Director of the Historic Burke Foundation.



Gaither House

Morganton, Burke Co., NC

A news article stated that the railroad career of Capt. William G. Corpening began in 1868 ("Asheville Daily Citizen"; 7-15-1891). We know that his projects continued through 1894, so his building career exceeded 25 years. By 1885, he was a substantial citizen of the region and was named Chief Marshall of the Fair of Western NC.

In 1880 and 1883, W.G. Corpening was a railroad contractor with a residence on Charlotte Street (Asheville City Directories).

On 4-29-1887, the "Asheville Citizen" stated, "Our old friend W.G. Corpening has been at the growing village of Birmingham (Ala.) for some months, managing a big contract in constructing the Memphis, Birmingham & Kansas Railroad."

In 1889, he was a contractor on the "Three C's Railroad".

In 1891, "The Engineering Record, Building Record & the Sanitary Engineer" (Vol. 24) included this entry: "*W.G. Corpening & Bro., Asheville - Earth ... Loose Rock ... Solid Rock*". That year, W.G. Corpening worked on the Bristol, Elizabethton & NC Railroad; its trackage later became part of Virginia and Southwestern Railroad. (In the early 1900's, the V&SWRR was largely maintained by the Virginia Iron Coal and Coke Co. to export their products. Railroad, iron manufacturing and coal mining jobs were created in Bristol TN/VA, in Elizabethton, Kingsport and Johnson City, TN, and in KY. Coal and iron were shipped to build several major cities - Louisville, Nashville, and Norfolk.)

In 1902, W.G. Corpening was working with Sam Dunavant and his son, Jack Dunavant, on contracts in Alabama ("News-Herald" of Morganton; 5-8-1902).

At the website "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers", many articles reference W.G. Corpening's local construction projects in Asheville. In 1892, he had a contract to grade South Main Street, and submitted bids for work on Patton Avenue and Depot Street. (One article this year referred to his firm as "W.G. Corpening & Son".) In 1893, Asheville Mayor Blanton appointed him as paving inspector for the rails on Patton Avenue. In 1894, he was chosen by Buncombe Co. to superintend the macadamizing of a road to Biltmore, and he was superintendent of the road building between Kenilworth and Victoria. Capt. Corpening conducted many land transactions in the Asheville and Swannanoa areas of Buncombe Co.

Other known projects included contracts on the Louisville & Nashville Railroad in TN, the French Broad Railroad in NC, and the Birmingham Mineral Railroad in AL.

Capt. Corpening worked on behalf of the Democratic Party at the local and county levels. And several social announcements mentioned his visits to Morganton in Burke Co. - the county of his birth and the residence of his sister, Virginia Corpening Dunavant.

Various news announcements referred to Capt. S.D. Dunavant working with another brother-in-law and railroad contractor, Z.T. Corpening of Morganton. Announcements even referred to a joint firm, "Dunavant, Corpening and Miller".

WILLIAM GALATIN CORPENING of Burke and Buncombe Counties, NC

**Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant's Brother
and Samuel David Dunavant's Brother-In-Law**

Born 1845 in Burke County, NC. Died 1915 in Asheville, NC.

Son of: David Jackson Corpening and Jane "Eliza" Horton

Husband of: Martha "Mattie" Eliza Patton Corpening (1840 - 1897)

Father of: Frank Patton Corpening (B. Asheville, NC 1871 - died Klamath Falls, OR 1934); Florence A. Corpening Fitzgerald (B. 1873 in Asheville, NC - D. 1970 Klamath Falls, OR); Rose Corpening (B. 1880 Asheville, NC - D. 1963); and Willie Grace Corpening Finley (B. 1882 in Asheville - D. Greensboro, NC 1974).

(Notes: Florence attended the Asheville Female College in 1890. By 1913, she was managing Hotel Florence. Frank Patton Corpening worked with his father as a railroad contractor and construction engineer before operating a ranch in Klamath Falls, Oregon. His sister, Florence, and her husband then followed Frank to Klamath Falls to manage the Claremont Hotel.)

Confederate Service: 1st Regiment NC Volunteer Company G

According to researcher Kira Devin, residences of W.G. Corpening were as follows: 1850 and 1860 in Burke Co. 1870 in Swannanoa, Buncombe Co. 1880 and 1910 in Asheville, Buncombe Co.

Per "NC Deaths 1906-1930", "William Galatin Corpening" ("Railroad Contractor") was born on 3-7-1844, died on 2-1-1915, and was buried near his wife, Mattie, at Asheville Cemetery (later renamed Riverside Cemetery).

Note: "Galatin" may have been the correct spelling of his middle name:

- His uncle, Albert G. Corpening I (1811-1853), was buried in the Abram Corpening Family Cemetery in Bridgewater (Linville), Burke Co.

- His cousin, Albert Galatin Corpening II (1852-1915), was buried in the North Catawba Baptist Church Cemetery, on the border of Burke and Caldwell Counties. His gravestone is inscribed "Albert Galatin Corpening".

**William Galatin Corpening
As Railroad Contractor
(Brother of Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant)
Asheville, NC -and- the South**

From the "Asheville Daily Citizen"; 7-15-1891:

CAPT. CORPENING TALKS

What the A. A. & B. Road Will Amount To

Such a Liberal Offer, He Says, is Unheard of in the Annals of Railroading - Turn Out and Vote

Captain W.G. Corpening, a leading citizen of this place, who has been for the last eight months engaged in completing a contract on the Bristol, Elizabethton and North Carolina Railroad arrived in the city on yesterday, for the avowed purpose of saying and doing all he could to induce the people to rally as one man to the railroad proposition to be voted on next Monday.

Capt. Corpening says that if the people will carry this proposition, they will be as certain of getting an independent northern connection as they go to the polls. He is thoroughly familiar with the Tennessee section of this line. He and his brother did much of the work already done between Bristol and the North Carolina line, and will continue to work on it till the contract is completed; and Mr. Corpening says the statement made by Mr. Dulaney, the president, in "The Citizen" yesterday can be implicitly relied upon. He says that in consequence of the stringency in money matters the work has been suspended for the last few months but that he received notice on Friday last, after a meeting of the board of directors, that the work would commence, and be pushed with all possible speed till completed.

Capt. Corpening says the subscriptions of Bristol, Bluff City, and Carter County, amounting to \$175,000 (*added note: in current dollars, about \$4,403,594*) were given in aid of the road. He says in all his railroad experience, extending back to 1868, he never heard of a subscription to railroad being other than as a gift, and the idea of a people getting a first mortgage lien, and the stockholders being required, as they are in this case, to secure the interest by a bond or obligation, in something unheard of in railroading.

Capt. Corpening says Asheville could afford to have a dozen railroads tied up with such a wide blue ribbon as that. He reminds the people that this road completed to Bristol, not only gives a connection with the Norfolk and Western, and the Louisville and Nashville over the Big Stone Gap road, but the Danville and East Tennessee and another new road soon to be built, going in the direction of Chattanooga.

The Bristol people, he says, are greatly moved, and exceedingly interested in what the people here are about to do, and if the vote is carried here a public meeting will be held there to express their gratification at the action of old Buncombe.

Capt. William G. Corpening was an influential citizen of Asheville in the early 1890's. The Asheville news article above referred to him as "a leading citizen of this place". Beyond Asheville, W.G. Corpening's completed projects contributed directly to the growth of towns and cities in VA, TN and AL. The early coal mining and iron manufacturing success of the Appalachian region would not have been possible without the railroads.

Right: Renovated Union Station of Bristol, TN - VA
Photo by Jeffrey Stoner (Cropped)

William Galatin Corpening As Railroad Contractor Asheville, NC -and- the South

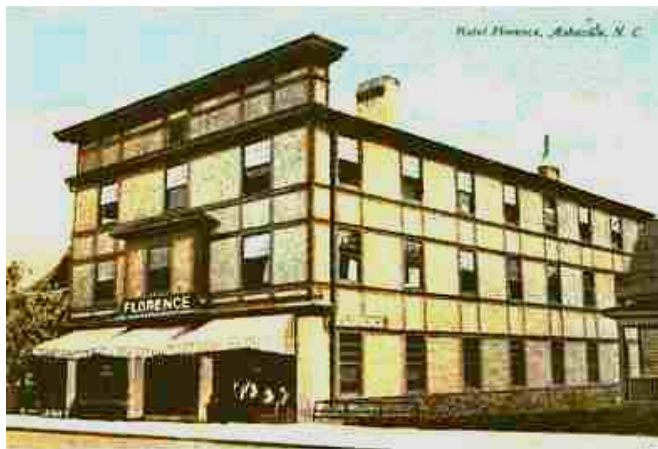
This article shows that, in 1891, railroad contractor William G. Corpening (Sam Dunavant's brother-in-law) was making an effort to create the "Asheville, Atlantic and Baltimore Railroad".

We usually think of railroad contractors as providing the technical expertise necessary to build a railroad. This article, however, shows that, as stakeholders, they were often also involved in the marketing and political efforts necessary to gain support and funding. This article documents that W.G. Corpening was involved with this project at the management level.

Many planned railroads never come to fruition because of the enormous start-up costs. Land has to be acquired, tracks laid, and equipment purchased before service could even begin. The AA&B Railroad never materialized as W.G. had envisioned. But this article also referenced another successful contract that W.G. Corpening had recently completed in TN, the Bristol, Elizabethton & NC Railroad.

The completed BE&NC Railroad trackage eventually became part of the Virginia and Southwestern Railroad - which continues service today in VA and TN as a lessor of the Norfolk Southern. (In fact, 268 miles of the Virginia and Southwestern are still in service.)





HOTEL FLORENCE

(Above Image Courtesy of Asheville's Pack Library)

- Asheville's "Hotel Florence" was owned by the Corpening family for at least eight years (1909-1917).
- Asheville's Pack Library has a newspaper clipping, dated 5-16-1907, which announced that a new unnamed hotel, built by A.S. Patterson, would soon open beside a passenger station. It would have 50 rooms and a large dining room, and would have the same management as the Misenheimer Hotel located on the same street.
- The 1907/1908 City Directory showed a "French Broad Hotel" at 436 Depot. D.W. Misenheimer was the proprietor and Mrs. Inac Miller was the manager.
- By 1909, "Wm G. Corpening" was the proprietor of the "Florence Hotel". "Miss Florence A. Corpening" was listed as "with Florence Hotel". (1909 City Directory) (Perhaps W.G. Corpening renamed the French Broad Hotel in honor of his daughter, Florence.)
- A brochure ("Asheville - The Ideal Autumn and Winter Resort City"), published by the Southern Railway Co. (circa early 1900's), provided this listing for "Hotel Florence":
"Proprietor: W.G. Corpening -- Heat: Steam -- Capacity: 100 Guests -- Rates: \$1.50 Day and Up"
 (Of 66 hotels, the brochure listed Hotel Florence as Asheville's 11th largest in guest capacity.)



Grave Markers
for
William G.
Corpening
and Wife,
Martha "Mattie"
Eliza
Patton
Corpening
Riverside
Cemetery,
Asheville, NC
(Former d/b/a
Asheville
Cemetery)
Section N,
Lot 24

- The 1913 City Directory showed "W.G. Corpening" as proprietor of the "Florence Hotel" at 436 Depot. "Miss Florence Corpening" was the hotel's manager.
- The 1917 City Directory showed "Miss F.A. Corpening" as proprietor of the "Florence Hotel". (Her father, proprietor W.G. Corpening, had died in 1915.)
- Later Asheville directories showed the hotel at 436 Depot operating under different names: "Hotel Asheville" (1926-1928) and "Walter Hotel" (1930).

William Galatin Corpening
As Hotel Proprietor
Asheville, NC

**From Holland to Pennsylvania
HENDRICK COURPENNING, Immigrant**

Born in United Netherlands;
Died in Somerset County, PA
(Great-Great-Grandfather of Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant)

Hendrick Courpenning left Holland, United Netherlands for Philadelphia, PA, in 1751 aboard the ship, "Duke of Bedford". He appeared on the ship's log as a Calvinist; he was probably of Dutch and French Huguenot descent. Hendrick brought along his sons, Albert and John Hendrick Courpenning. They settled in Washington Co., MD, then Somerset Co., PA. During this period, their name was apparently shortened to Corpening.



Model of the "Duke of Bedford" (1750)

**From Pennsylvania to Burke County, NC
"ALBERT" ABRAHAM CORPENING, Justice of the Burke Co. Court of Common Pleas**
Born 1747 in the Netherlands; Died 1827 in Burke County, NC
(Great-Grandfather of Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant)

"ALBERT CORPENING, a native of the Netherlands, settled in Pennsylvania and married a lady of German parentage, BARBARA PROPST. He removed to Burke County about the year 1777, purchased a large tract of land on John's River from the heirs of Gen. JOSEPH MCDOWELL, (KNOWN AS "Ash Hill), on which Gen. MCDOWELL lived at the time of his death in 1801. Mr. CORPENING was the ancestor of five sons, JOHN, GEORGE, JACOB, ABRAM, and DAVID CORPENING, all of whom were respected, industrious, well-to-do farmers of ample means, owning good lands on the Catawba, Linville and John's Rivers and Lower Creek. All by the name of CORPENING of this county are descendants of these five brothers. Mr. ALBERT CORPENING had one daughter, MARY, who was the wife of Major FORNEY of Upper Creek. Mrs. Forney was known for all those good qualities - industry, thrift, hospitality and benevolence - that are characteristic of the better class of Germans."

(From "Biographical Sketches from Burke County, NC", by Col. Thomas George Walton.
First published in 1894 in the "Old Morganton Herald".)

Other Notes:

- In 1774, Hendrick's son, Albert Corpening, married Barbara Propst in Lynn Township, York Co., PA, and they left for NC that same year. (Barbara's German Bible is preserved at the Pack Library in Asheville, NC.)
- By about 1777, Albert and Barbara were living in Burke Co., NC. Albert, a Lutheran, would become a Justice of the Burke Co. Court of Pleas. Albert and Barbara's children were John, George, Jacob, Abram, David, Mary, Elizabeth, and Catherine.

Other Sources:

- "The Heritage of Henderson Co., NC; Vol. II"; Editor George Alexander Jones; 1988
- "The Corpening Family Papers (1780-1922)", Bingham Center, Duke University

**Ancestral Homes of Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant's Family
United Netherlands > Somerset Co., PA > Burke Co., NC**

Abram Corpening, Linville River Farmer

Born 1776; Died 1847 Burke Co., NC

Residence: Bridgewater (On the Linville River), Burke Co., NC
(Grandfather of Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant)

Abram Corpening married Letticia "Letta" Estes (1790-1851) and built his homestead at Bridgewater, Burke Co. A biography by Col. Thomas George Walton referred to Abram Corpening as prosperous. Given that he held Slaves, the farm would have been fairly large.

Over time, Abram's land would be surrounded by some thriving attractions. A gold rush occurred at Brindle Creek (1828-1849). The Western NC Railroad arrived at the Glen Alpine Depot in 1868, prompting development of the Glen Alpine Springs Hotel. That luxury hotel was one of the state's largest, accommodating 100 guests, and it offered healing waters, billiards, bowling, lavish meals, and dancing. Many guests traveled from Charleston, SC and Savannah, GA to stay at Glen Alpine, or the other nearby resorts - the Connelly Mineral Springs Hotel at South Mountain, or the Nebo Methodist Campground. A trail near Abram Corpening's land would become Interstate 40.

Photo: Glen Alpine Springs Hotel in
Below: western Burke Co. (1878-1902)
(From Burke Co. Public Library)

Photos One of the Region's Corpening
Right: Houses (Caldwell Co.; 1848)
Front and Back Perspectives
(From "Rare and Unique Digital
Collections" of NC State Univ.)



David Jackson "Linville Jack" Corpening, Confederate Colonel

Born 1819 in NC; Died 1870

(Father of Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant)

From "Confederate Colonels: A Biographical Register" by Bruce S. Allardice; 2008.
Full entry:

Corpening, David Jackson. Born July 31, 1819, NC. Known as "Linville Jack" to distinguish him from other Corpening cousins. Farmer on the Linville River in Burke Co., NC, prewar. Md. Jane Horton. Sgt. Co. F. 3d NC Cav., Oct. 7, 1861. QM sgt., Dec. 17, 1861. Discharged June 11, 1862. Appointed AQM, July 28, 1863, to administer the tax in kind in NC's 9th Congressional Dist. Capt., Corpening's Co., NC Senior Reserves, July 13, 1864. Col., 5th NC Senior Reserves, Dec. 5, 1864. Paroled May 29, 1865, Morganton, NC. Burke Co. farmer postwar. Died July 4, 1870. Buried Corpening family cemetery, Morganton.

From the research of Jon Martin, posted online:

Notes for David Jackson Corpening:

1850 Census: Burke Co., NC Roll 622, Page 400 (Occupation: Farmer)

1860 Census: Morganton, Burke Co., NC, Page 379

1870 Census: Linville, Burke, NC, Page 348

David Jackson Corpening may have been more of a planter than a farmer. In 1852, a "David Jackson Corpening" served as a Justice of the Burke Co. Court of Pleas and Quarter Sessions. Other Corpenings who served on this same court included George Corpening (1831), David Corpening (1837), and Thomas Jefferson Corpening (1867).

The above references to "Linville" are referring to the proximity of David Jackson Corpening's farm to the Linville River.

The "Corpening Family Papers (1780-1922)", archived at Duke University's Rubenstein Library, contain many primary documents pertaining to the family's farms in Burke and Caldwell Counties. (Caldwell Co. was formed in 1841 from parts of Burke Co. and Wilkes Co.) The "Corpening and Kincaid Papers (1761-1887)", archived at UNC's Wilson Library, pertain to the same region.

Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant's Family Bridgewater, Burke Co., NC

Mary "Virginia" Corpening was the wife of Samuel David Dunavant, and the daughter of Col. David Jackson "Linville Jack" Corpening and Jane "Eliza" Horton. Two of the young children she had with Samuel Dunavant are buried in the Corpening - Dunavant Family Cemetery. Inscriptions of the Corpening and Dunavant headstones, as recorded by Surveyor Jack Hall, are given below. (Inscriptions are not always clear so these dates should be verified against other sources.)

Corpening, Abram (b. 29 Sep 1776 or 1796 - d. 23 May 1847)	(Abram was Virginia's grandfather.)
Corpening, Albert G. (b. 27 Jan 1811 - d. 22 Jan 1853)	
Corpening, Alexander H. (b. 5 Mar 1855 - d. 31 Jul 1855)	(Inscription: "Son of D. J. and J. E. Corpening")
Corpening, D. J. (b. - d. 4 Jul 1870) (50 yrs. 11 mos. 5 days)	(Col. David Jackson Corpening was Virginia's father.)
Corpening, Eliza Horton (b. - d. 26 Apr 1875) (age 55 yrs, 11 mos.)	(This was Virginia's mother.)
Corpening, George (b. 16 Nov 1785 - d. 20 Oct 1856)	
Corpening, Jackson Kelly (b. 17 Jul 1856 - d. 8 Sep 1859)	(Inscription: "Son of D. J. and J. E. Corpening")
Corpening, John H. (b. 7 Mar 1826 - d. 21 Sep 1859)	
Corpening, Letticia (b. 23 Nov 1790 - d. 29 Oct 1851)	(Letticia, or "Letta", was Virginia's grandmother.)
Corpening, Polley (b. 6 Nov 1796 - d. 20 Feb 1867)	
Dunavant, Lorena I. (b. - d. 17 Jan 1870) age 19 days	(Inscription: "Dtr of S.D. and M.V. Dunavant")
Dunavant, Ludwell J. (b. - d. 16 Jul 1875) age 1 yr. 10 mos.	(Inscription: "Son of S.D. and M.V. Dunavant")

Several names associated with the NC Dunavant family appear in this cemetery: "S.D." (Samuel), "M.V." (Virginia), Jackson, and Horton. The cemetery also contains members of the Anthony and Turnbull families.

Slaves, who likely served the Corpening family, were buried in unmarked graves outside of the cemetery's wall.



Corpening - Dunavant Family Cemetery
Bridgewater, Burke Co., NC

Duke Energy now owns the land that contains the Abram Corpening Family Cemetery (known locally as the Corpening-Anthony-Turnbill Cemetery) shown here. Duke Energy allows hunting in the area and has not maintained the cemetery well.

The Corpening house no longer stands but its foundation imprint is still visible. The cemetery is located between Snow Hill (or Snowhill) United Methodist Church (5425 Snowhill Church Rd, Morganton) and the Bridgewater Powerhouse (5790 North Powerhouse Rd, Morganton). The cemetery is about 1.5 miles north of the church on a dirt road.

In 1916, the Linville Dam was built, creating the current Bridgewater Powerhouse. Water released from this dam flows along the Linville River less than a mile before joining the Catawba River and creating the man-made reservoir, Lake James. Duke Energy has applied to build a new Bridgewater Powerhouse that would better withstand earthquakes.

CHAPTER 2

WILLIAM PEMBERTON DUNAVANT (Railroad Contractor of Memphis, TN)

**From Southside Virginia to
Memphis, TN**

Years: 1837-1891

Related Family: Anderson (of VA)

- All uses of "William" refer to William Pemberton Dunavant unless otherwise noted.
- Historical newspaper articles usually referred to William Pemberton Dunavant as "W.P. Dunavant".

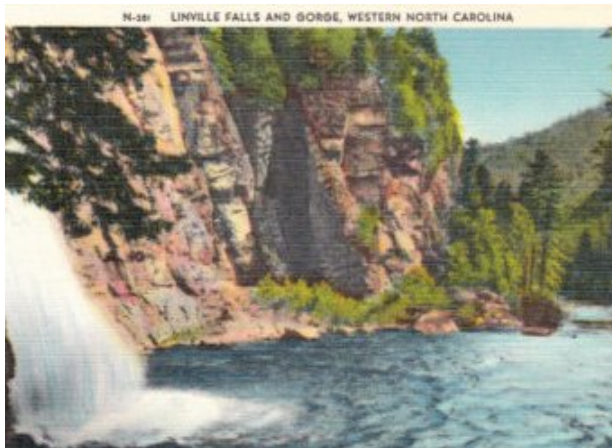
When William Pemberton Dunavant settled in Memphis, TN, in the 1870's, he joined a city of about 40,000 residents.

He became the president of the Northwestern Construction Company headquartered there, reportedly one of the nation's largest contractor organizations. In that capacity, he helped to create many Southern and Midwestern railroads. His projects were reported through 1891, so his railroad building career spanned over 35 years. He also served as a director of several Memphian banks.

By the early 1900's, Memphis had become the world's largest cotton market. The descendants of William Pemberton Dunavant would develop in Memphis the world's largest privately owned cotton company, Dunavant Enterprises.

Postcard Image Right: Historic Waterfront of Memphis, TN.
William Pemberton Dunavant settled in Memphis, a city that had welcomed many steamboats along the Mississippi River.

Postcard Image Below: Linville Falls, NC, Near the Blue Ridge Parkway.
Samuel David Dunavant settled in Morganton. The family of his wife, Virginia Corpening, owned land along the Linville River near Bridgewater, a community located west of Morganton.



"Capt. S.D. Dunavant ... is a brother of Capt. Wm. Dunavant, the millionaire contractor of Memphis, Tenn..."

From "The Asheville Democrat" of Asheville, NC (5-22-1890) as presented by Newspapers.com. (The article was entitled, "The Contract Let: Grading of the Southern & Western Air-Line To Be Completed".)

"Captain Sam Dunavant's brother, William Dunavant, was an influential and wealthy railroad president, and moved to Memphis, Tennessee."

From "American Biography: A New Cyclopaedia", Volume 42, 1930.
Editor: William Richard Cutter.
(Published under the direction of the American Historical Society.)

Brothers Sam and William Dunavant: Both Prominent Railroad Contractors
Samuel David Dunavant and William Pemberton Dunavant
Morganton, NC -and- Memphis, TN

Childhood Near "High Bridge" in Southside VA

What inspired young men like Sam and William Dunavant, living in an agricultural region, to choose railroad careers? Of course, no one knows for sure. But it's been said that civil construction was the most important profession of the late 1800's because this was the era when our railroads and cities were being built. If a town didn't connect itself to a railroad line, it would quickly be bypassed by others that did.

And so it turned out that Farmville, VA, wasn't so isolated after all. The businessmen of Prince Edward Co. offered financial incentives to route the Southside Railroad to Farmville. To accomplish this route, the railroad had to build the High Bridge, six miles east of Farmville.

By their teenage years, Sam and William could have hopped a train in Farmville, and connected to Richmond, Petersburg, or NC.



Left:
This Farmville Train Depot was built in 1902.



Below:
High Bridge was built for the Southside Railroad across the Appomattox River Valley, about 6 miles from Farmville in Prince Edward Co., VA. The photo below was taken in 1865 during the repair of fire damage sustained from the Civil War.

The Battle of High Bridge: The Southside Railroad was a vital supply route for Richmond and Petersburg during the Civil War. On April 6-7, 1865, one of VA's final battles was fought near Farmville, the Battle of High Bridge. Confederate forces attempted to burn the bridge to slow Union troops but Union forces saved it. The Army of Northern VA was unable to rest at Farmville as planned and had to march on, hungry and tired, to Appomattox. At the Battle of Appomattox Court House on April 9, they became surrounded on three sides. Robert E. Lee then agreed to the demand of Ulysses S. Grant: unconditional surrender. This ended the Virginia campaign and was one of the War's last major battles.

High Bridge was, and remains, an awesome sight - 2400 feet long, 160 feet high - one of the world's largest when built. The bridge's scale and engineering, its incredible view of the Appomattox River, and its linkage to the greater world, would likely have inspired the young Dunavants with the possibilities of railways.

Brothers Sam and William Dunavant: Early Years in Southside VA
Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties (Formerly Amelia Co.) -and- Buckingham Co., VA

Path of Samuel David Dunavant

Southside VA => Western NC

In 1839, Sam Dunavant was born in Farmville, Prince Edward Co., VA. (His father, William Henry Dunavant, had been born in that same county.) Farmville is located halfway between Buckingham and Nottoway, VA, the two areas where Sam's grandfather Pemberton Dunavant had owned large farms. By 1861, about age 21, Sam had moved from VA to Western NC to work on the Western NC Railroad.

After his Civil War service with NC and VA regiments, he returned to Morganton, NC, where he married, raised a family, and resided for the rest of his life. As the first known member of our Dunavant family to move from VA and settle permanently in Western NC, Sam became the head of the Western NC Dunavants. But he remained proud of his Virginian ancestry: one of his sons was named Virginius - a practice often done to indicate lineage from an older Virginian family. There is no evidence that Sam, nor any of his ancestors, nor any of his descendants, ever settled in TN.

Confederate Service of Capt. Samuel David Dunavant

Sam chose to do his Civil War duty in NC, and later in the dangerous war zone of VA - near his birthplace and his Virginian family. NC Muster Rolls show that Samuel D. Dunavant, age 21, enlisted in Mecklenburg Co., NC, on 5-28-1861. He enlisted into the 6th Regiment NC Infantry (Company E); he was mustered in and discharged as a Sergeant. He was present or accounted for until wounded at Fredericksburg, VA, Dec. 12-13, 1862. On 1-27-1863, he transferred into the 4th Regiment VA Cavalry (Company K). (The VA regiment he joined recruited from the central VA counties, including Buckingham Co.)

Sources: (1) "United States, Civil War Soldiers Index" (listed as "Samuel D. Dunnivant"); and (2) "NC Troops - A Roster, 1861 - 1865" (listed as "Samuel D. Dunavant").

Path of William Pemberton Dunavant

Southside VA => Western NC => Shelby County, TN

In 1837, William Pemberton Dunavant was born in Buckingham Co., VA, where his grandfather, Pemberton Dunavant, lived.

The 1860 Census recorded "Wm P. Dunevant, born in VA, age 25" in Burke Co., NC. (He would have been a bit younger than age 25 in 1860.)

In 1861, the "Fisher Family Papers" kept at the University of NC indicate that "William P. Dunavant" was supervising the construction of the Western NC Railroad. So in 1860 and 1861, both Dunavant brothers were doing supervisory work on the WNCRR. The two young men would have collaborated to learn and manage the technical complexities and financial risks of railroad contracting. Like Sam, William had migrated from VA to NC.

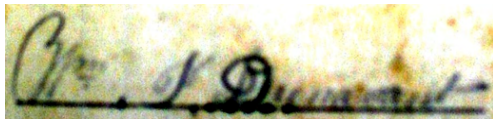
William later moved his residence to Memphis, TN, while Sam stayed in NC. (The Dunavants of Lauderdale, TN, were also descended from Amelia Co., VA, so William may have known some extended family members in that area. Memphis was just a short steamboat ride along the Mississippi River to Lauderdale Co.)

Confederate Service of Col. William Pemberton Dunavant

William Dunavant enlisted in Confederate service and obtained the rank of Colonel.

Brothers Sam and William Dunavant: Similar Paths in Migration, War, and Profession

From Southside VA to Morganton, NC, and Memphis, TN



An obituary in the "Charlotte Observer" (6-9-1906) recognized Sam Dunavant of Morganton as moving to NC in 1860 "to superintend the construction of the western division of the Southern", earlier known as the Western NC Railroad.

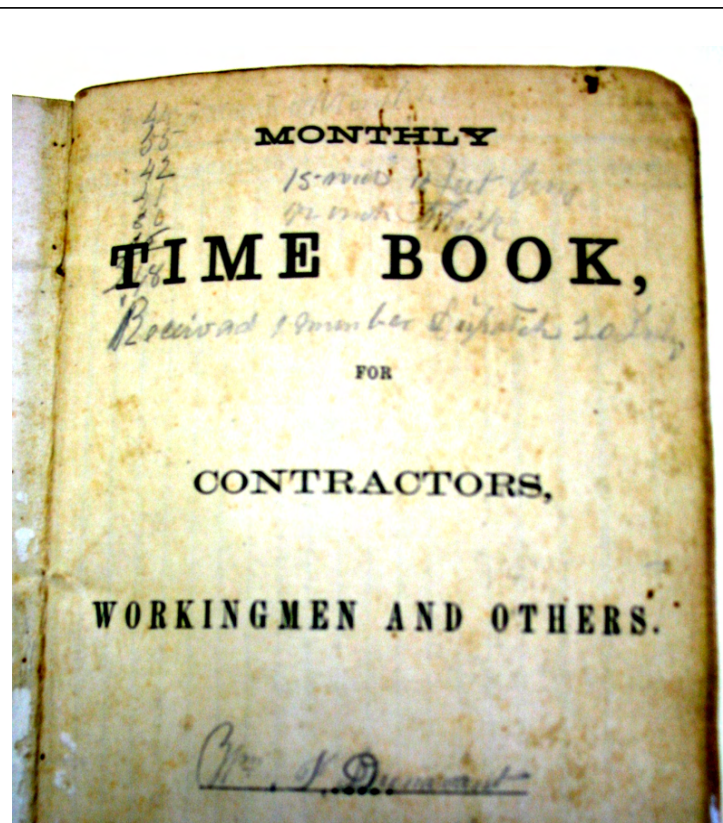
We now have evidence that Samuel's brother, William Dunavant, also helped to construct the WNCRR. The page shown right is preserved as part of the Fisher Family Papers in the Special Collections of the Wilson Library of the University of NC at Chapel Hill (Collection 258). Charles Frederick Fisher of Salisbury had the initial contract to construct the WNCRR from Salisbury to Burke County. During the Civil War, Fisher commanded the 6th Regiment NC Infantry - the same unit that Sam Dunavant joined. (Col. Fisher would become one of the state's early Civil War heroes, with Fort Fisher named in his honor.)

Folder 132 was labeled, "Time book March - September 1861: Time book for the Western NC Railroad, supervised by William P. Dunavant". Folder 140 was labeled, "Time book, February - December 1861: Time book for work on the Western NC Railroad, kept by supervisor William P. Dunavant". Each folder contains a separate time book.

This was a major project for William, early in his career and before he settled in Memphis, TN.

William's time books, and Sam's obituaries, confirm that both brothers engaged in the initial construction of the WNCRR in 1860 and 1861 - bringing Western NC its first east-west line.

William Pemberton Dunavant
Early Professional Life
Western NC



Similar Post-War Career Paths

After the War, the career paths of William and Sam Dunavant continued to be similar. Both of their railroad contracting careers took them throughout the South.

Sam remained in Western NC, where he settled near Morganton and built a variety of local businesses.

William left NC and settled in Memphis, TN, where he would invest in local insurance companies and banks.

Sam developed Morganton, NC, and William developed Memphis, TN.

Accomplishments:

- President of the Northwestern Construction Co.
- Senior Member of the firm, "Dunavant and Kelley" which formed in Memphis in 1872. The firm was later known as "Dunavant, Kelley and Piper".
- Owned and operated the Memphis and Holly Springs Railroad.
- Started construction of the Memphis and Birmingham Railroad, which later combined with other railroads to create the St. Louis and San Francisco Railroad. (It never got anywhere near San Francisco but it did become a regional success with two main lines: St. Louis-Tulsa-Oklahoma City, and Kansas City-Memphis-Birmingham.)
- W.P. was involved with the following projects: the Brownville & Jackson RR, the Mississippi Valley RR, the Fort Smith & Little Rock RR, the Mobile & Ohio RR, the Chesapeake & Ohio RR, the Memphis & Little Rock RR, the New Orleans & Northeastern RR, and the Memphis, Selma & Brunswick RR.

Sources: "Times-Picayune" (7-22-1883 and 6-25-1932) and "Petersburg Daily Index-Appeal (1-19-1886)

William Pemberton Dunavant Later Professional Life Office in Memphis, TN

"William" Pemberton Dunavant's Later Professional Life

From "Who's Who in Railroadng in North America" (1887; Issue 2):

"Dunavant, William Pemberton, President Northwestern Construction Co. Office, Memphis, Tenn. Born Aug 28, 1837, Virginia. Entered railway service 1858; to date, Railway contractor and superintendent several railways; at present engaged in constructing Kansas City, Wyandotte & Northwestern Ry."

From "Visiting Memphians - A Party of TN Capitalists Arrived Yesterday" in the "Kansas City Times" (5-27-1887):

"Mr. W.P. Dunavant is the largest railroad contractor in the south and the gentleman who was at the head of the construction department at Northwestern."

From "A Notable Railroad Firm" in "The Times-Picayune" (7-22-1883; GenealogyBank.com.):

"Col. W.P. Dunavant, the senior member, is well known as one of the leading railroad contractors of this country, and to him is entrusted all that pertains to the finances of the concern, besides he is charged with the handling of all the contracts, the employment of hands ... The Colonel is originally from VA, where he was engaged for a number of years in railroad building."

News regarding W.P. Dunavant's projects was reported through 1891 so his railroad career spanned over 35 years.

From "The Memphis Ledger" (Memphis, Tennessee; 7-24-1883):

A Big Rail Road Contract - The Heaviest Ever Taken in the South -

Messrs Dunavant & Kelly, of this City, have been awarded the contract to finish all the uncompleted grading on the Mississippi Valley Rail (The LNO&T) Road, from the Louisiana Line to the intersection of the Natchez and Jackson Road, embracing much heavy work and more than a million cubic yards.

This work will be rushed through, and by the time it is done nearly, if not all the Road from Memphis to New Orleans will be ready for the Iron. Messrs Dunavant & Kelly have done some very heavy work within the last few years, but this is said to be the heaviest contract ever taken by them, or any firm in the South.

These gentlemen are noted for their enterprise and reliability. They are members of the firm of P. McCadden & Co., of this city, a strong and popular grocery house, Mr. P. McCadden, the resident member of the firm, received the congratulations yesterday and today of many friends upon the good stroke of fortune made by Messrs Kelly & Dunavant. He is fortunate in having such a business connection which insures for the house a large trade down in a rich section, and that ahead of the Rail Road.

Through such enterprising men, Memphis is doing her full part onward opening up the country around us and scoring its rich trade.

The Anderson Family: Elizabeth "Bettie" Frances Anderson was born in Farmington, Albemarle Co., VA in 1838. In 1860, when Bettie Anderson married William Pemberton Dunavant, her family lived in Cumberland Co., VA - adjacent to Buckingham and Amelia Counties. Some members of her family may have later relocated to Lynchburg, VA: in 1881, the family of William Pemberton Dunavant visited relatives in Lynchburg, VA (Public Ledger of Memphis, 7-31-1881).

Marriage in VA: A VA newspaper, the Daily Dispatch (Vol. 17, Number 21, 1-25-1860) reported: "Married ... at the residence of the bride's father, by the Rev. A. Clarke, Mr. William P. Dunavant, of Buckingham, to Miss Bettie F., second daughter of John R. Anderson, Esq., of Cumberland Co. Richmond and Petersburg papers please copy." (Article found at virginiachronicle.com.) So in January of 1860, William P. Dunavant of Buckingham married a lady from nearby Cumberland Co., VA. (Since the marriage was reported in three regions of Virginia, we can assume that the Dunavant and Anderson families had social connections in those regions.)

Family Started in VA: Later that same year (1860), Bettie delivered their first child, Dora Clark Dunavant, in Lynchburg where her husband had worked on the Orange & Alexandria Railroad. In 1862, daughter Maggie Dunavant was born in VA, and in 1865, daughter Ella H. Dunavant was born in VA.

Migration to NC and TN: By 1871, it appears that the family had migrated from VA since son Walker Dunavant was born in NC. By 1877, son B. F. Dunavant I was born in TN, and in 1880, son Wm. Dunavant was born in TN. The 1880 Census showed the family living in Shelby Co., TN (Memphis).



Brothers William and Samuel Dunavant: Given their similar migration, war service, and career paths, brothers Sam and William Dunavant may have been close. In the Forest Hill Cemetery of Morganton, NC, a young child named "William P. Dunavant (Son of S.D. and M.V. Dunavant)" is buried near his parents. Since Sam's brother, William Pemberton Dunavant, was the only family member with that name, Sam likely named this son in honor of his brother.

Bettie's Death: Bettie died in Bolivar, Hardeman Co., TN in 1932 ("Times - Picayune"; 6-25-1932).

Eldest Daughter: The eldest daughter of William and Bettie, Dora Clark Dunavant, married John Edwin Mask. Like her mother, Dora also died in Bolivar, Hardeman County, TN. Dora died in 1942.

Left Photo (Eldest Daughter's Descendants): This image is from an old postcard labeled, "Dunavant Mask Home, Bolivar, Tenn." The inscription on the back of the postcard stated:

"This lovely old home of Colonel and Mrs. Dunavant Mask was erected near the close of the Civil War.

Its quaint style of architecture and its priceless antique furniture make it one of the loveliest homes in Tenn." The house, which still stands, was built in the late 1800's for Lucy Bills and was later occupied for many years by Dave Parran. It's listed as "Wren's Nest" on the National Historic Register. A great-grandson of William Pemberton Dunavant, William Dunavant Mask II (1928-2007) lived at Wren's Nest with his wife, Peggy. William Pemberton Dunavant's wife Bettie, daughter Dora, and great-grandson William Dunavant Mask all died in Bolivar. (Bettie Anderson Dunavant was buried by her husband's side in Memphis.)

Other Descendants: The research of Gay Mathis indicates that other children of William and Bettie Dunavant would marry or settle in Memphis, TN, Alabama, Kentucky, Missouri, and Texas. Some of their descendants would create Dunavant Enterprises of Memphis. From 1929 to 2010, that company grew to become one of world's largest cotton merchandisers, and in 2010, it transitioned into logistics and realty.

William Pemberton Dunavant and Bettie Anderson Dunavant Personal Life

Southside VA -and- Memphis and Bolivar, TN

Col. William Pemberton Dunavant

Born 1837 in Buckingham Co., VA
Died 1891 in Memphis, Shelby Co., TN

The obituary shown right states that, at age 19, William was superintendent of contract work on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad (O&ARR). William would have been age 19 about 1856. By then, the initial construction of the O&ARR in Virginia (between Alexandria and Charlottesville) had been completed. Between 1854 and 1860, the O&ARR was extended from Charlottesville to Lynchburg; that may have been William's project. This extension allowed the O&ARR to connect with the Southside Railroad which ran through the region where William and Sam Dunavant had been reared. (The O&ARR played an important role in Virginia's economy and, as the only rail link between Richmond and Washington, DC, it was frequently fought over during the Civil War.)

The first child of Bettie and William Dunavant, Dora Clark Dunavant, was born in Lynchburg, VA, in 1860. At the time, Lynchburg was one of the wealthiest towns, per capita, in the nation. They traded this life in an established cultural center for an unknown future in the less developed areas of Western NC and TN. William would help to develop Memphis into a railroad hub, as well as a major American city. (Memphis, TN, would eventually grow eight times larger than Lynchburg, VA.) In Memphis, the descendants of Bettie and William Dunavant would create Dunavant Enterprises, recently the world's largest privately owned cotton company.



William and Elizabeth "Bettie" Anderson Dunavant
Elmwood Cemetery of Memphis, Shelby Co., TN

"Memphis Avalanche"

(Full Obituary; 6-1-1891)

A Well-Known and Prominent Memphis Joins the Silent Majority

Col. William Pemberton Dunavant died Saturday, at his home near Gill station, after a long and painful illness. His ailment was dropsy, and his life had been despaired of for several weeks, although all that medical skill could suggest was done to save him.

Col. Dunavant was one of the live, progressive citizens of Memphis. He had large interests here, being a member of the firm of P. McCadden & Col.*, and was until recently president of the Northwestern Construction Company, one of the largest organization of contractors in the United States. He was associated in business with Commissioner Martin Kelly for a number of years and was a director in several banks and connected with various business enterprises. He was born in Buckingham County, Va., August 28, 1827**. He received an academic education, and at the age of 19 years became superintendent of contract work on the Orange and Alexandria railroad.

Col. Dunavant leaves a wife and five children to mourn his loss. The funeral will take place today at 4 o'clock.

Added Notes:

* According to the "Memphis Appeal" (9-1-1886), Dunavant and Kelly ("well known railroad contractors") had joined Mr. P. McCadden's business in Memphis - selling wholesale groceries, cotton, liquor and cigars. (W.P. Dunavant's son-in-law, John Edwin Mask, supervised the firm's cotton department.)

** This obituary was incorrect regarding the year of birth. The tombstone, and all other known sources, indicate 1837 as the year of birth.

William Pemberton Dunavant - Obituary Southside VA -and- Memphis and Bolivar, TN

CHAPTER 3

Sam and William Dunavant's Sisters:

**Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey,
Wife of Robert H. Godsey
(Railroad Contractor of Richmond, VA)**

and

**Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins,
Wife of William W. Hopkins
(Carpenter of Richmond, VA)**

**From Southside Virginia to
Richmond, VA**

Years: 1841-1915

Related Families:

Godsey (of VA) and Hopkins (of VA)

Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey and Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins were the Virginian sisters of railroad contractors, Samuel David Dunavant and William Pemberton Dunavant. They were both born in Buckingham County, and both died in Richmond.

Mollie was the wife of a railroad contractor, Robert H. Godsey, and their house still stands in Richmond's Oregon Hill neighborhood.

Sarah was the wife of a carpenter, William W. Hopkins.

Both sisters attended Richmond's Grace Street Baptist Church, continuing the Dunavant family's Baptist tradition which dated back to at least 1832.

Both sisters endured the Civil War and witnessed the reconstruction of Richmond.

From Buckingham Co., VA



To Richmond, VA



In 1844, Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant, a daughter of William Henry Dunavant, was born in Buckingham Co. (Her husband's obituary stated that he also had many relatives in Buckingham Co.) Her use of the name Mollie is not surprising: Mollie was the common nickname for the formal name of Mary. Mollie was the wife of Railroad Contractor Robert H. Godsey and the mother of several children: Lottie Estelle Godsey, Charles H. Godsey and Robert James Godsey. We know that Mollie remained close to her sister, Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins: the Godsey and Hopkins families both attended Richmond's Grace Baptist Church and the 1900 Census Report found their families living beside one another.

Snapshots from Newspapers and Census Reports

From "The Richmond Dispatch" (Richmond, VA, 12-27-1891). Presented by the "Chronicling America" website of the Library of Congress:

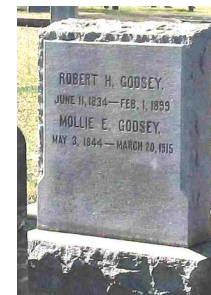
"Mr. William H. Dunavant, of Buckingham County, is spending the holidays with his daughters, Mrs. R.H. Godsey and Mrs. William Hopkins, 1414 West Clay Street."

The 1900 U.S. Census for Richmond, Clay Ward, Richmond City, Virginia (ED 58 Pg. 4a) showed that Mollie E. Godsey and her son, James Godsey, were living next door to Mollie's sister, Sarah Hopkins.

The 1910 U.S. Census showed "Mollie E. Godsey"(age 66) living in Richmond's Lee Ward with a son and granddaughter.

From "Richmond Times-Dispatch (Richmond, VA; 3-21-1915):

"Died at the residence of her daughter, Mrs. L.E. Gills, 2210 Edwards Avenue, South Richmond, MRS. MOLLIE E. GODSEY, age seventy-one. Funeral from Oak Grove Baptist Church, Monday, March 22, at 11 a.m. Interment Oakwood."



**Virginian Sister of Brothers Sam and William Dunavant:
Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey (1844-1915)
Buckingham Co. and Richmond, VA**

Burial: Mollie and her husband, Robert, were interred in Richmond's Oakwood Cemetery.

"The Times" (Richmond, VA)
(Full Obituary; 2-2-1889)

THE DEATH of ROBERT H. GODSEY

Well Known Citizen Passed Away Yesterday

Was A Good and Kind Man

For Many Years He was a Member of
Grace Street Baptist Church and
Was Held in High Esteem.

Mr. Robert H. Godsey died at his residence,
No. 127 South Laurel Street, yesterday at
7:25 a.m., in the sixty-fifth year of his age.

He leaves two sisters, Mrs. C.E. Justis and
Mrs. Oliver Gathright, a brother, Mr. J.M. Godsey,
a wife and three children - Charles H., Lottie E.,
and Robt. James.

The funeral will take place from Grace Street
Baptist Church, of which he was a devoted
member, this afternoon at 3:30 o'clock.

Mr. Godsey was born in Powhatan County,
and had many relatives in that county and in
Buckingham, and was widely and well known.

Early in life he came to Richmond and was for
a number of years a contractor and did much
work for the Southern Railroad. Later, he was

employed in the mechanical department of the
Richmond, Fredericksburg and Potomac Railroad.

He was for many years a member of Grace Street
Baptist Church, and was a consistent, quiet and
unassuming citizen, and was esteemed by a large
number of friends. His genial disposition made
him a favorite with all whom he came in contact.
He will be missed not only by those in his
immediate family, but by a large circle elsewhere,
and his place will not be an easy one to fill.

He was a member of the Knights of Honor
and that body will take part in the funeral
services.

Added Notes:

- This obituary was provided by the Library of
Virginia and was posted at the NEH website,
"Chronicling America: Historic American
Newspapers." (The image was part of the obituary.)

- Mr. Godsey married Mary "Mollie" Dunavant
of Buckingham Co. in 1865.

- Knights of Honor was a Masonic order.



Like the Dunavant
family's contractors
in NC and TN,
Mr. Godsey often
completed projects for
the Southern Railway.

**Virginian Brother-In-Law of Sam and William Dunavant:
Railroad Contractor Robert H. Godsey (1834-1889)
Powhatan Co., Buckingham Co., and Richmond, VA**

- Wedding Announcement -
 "Virginia Pilot" (Norfolk, VA)
 (Full Article; 7-12-1899)

A PRETTY WEDDING

Miss Lottie E. Godsey of 127 South Laurel Street (*added: in Richmond*) and Mr. J. Vernon Gills, of Lynchburg, were married at the West View Baptist Church at 6 o'clock this evening.

The groom is a postal clerk on the Norfolk and Western Railway between Lynchburg and Bristol and is one of the most popular young men of Lynchburg. The bride is the only daughter of Mrs. R.H. Godsey and is a popular young lady of the brunette type, with black eyes and hair.

The newly married ones left on the northbound train for a trip to Niagara Falls and Northern cities, and will return to Lynchburg, which will be their future home.

A reception for the ushers was held at the home of the bride last night, when the bridal presents were shown. These are both numerous and costly, of silver, cut glass and china, and go far showing the popularity of the couple.

(This obituary was provided by the Library of Virginia and was posted at the NEH website, "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers.")

In 1899, the Gills-Godsey wedding was held at Richmond's West View Baptist Church (which evolved into today's Tabernacle Baptist Church). This continued the Dunavants' long Baptist tradition in VA. Pemberton Dunavant had donated land for the Enon Baptist Church in Buckingham Co. and his son, William Henry Dunavant, had remained a lifelong member of that church. In Richmond, Lottie's parents were faithful members of Grace Street Baptist Church.

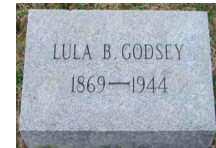
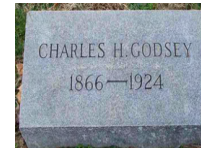


Joseph Vernon Gills was employed by the Norfolk and Western Railway - a US Class I system that formed in 1838. In 1982, it merged with the Southern Railway to create today's Norfolk Southern Railway.

Regarding Lottie's Brother, Charles H. Godsey:

Mary Frances Wood posted the following GEDCOM information at Wikitree: "Charles H. Godsey - Born 1867. Son of R.H. and Mollie E. Godsey. Husband of E. Lula Bethel: Married April 25, 1893 in Richmond, VA. Burial location unknown."

Further research may confirm that the gravestones below, at Petersburg's Blandford Cemetery, pertain to Lottie's brother, Charles H. Godsey.



Snapshots from Newspapers and Census Reports

1874: Lottie was born to Robert H. Godsey and Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey in Richmond.

1896: On 8-2-1896, the "Richmond Dispatch" stated that Lottie Godsey of Richmond, and her grandfather W.H. Dunavant of Enonville, would visit Capt. S.D. Dunavant in Morganton.

1899: After her wedding in 1899, Lottie and her husband lived awhile in Lynchburg.

1900: U.S. Census showed "Lottie E Gills" (age 26) and her family boarding in the home of "Geo H Poling" in Lynchburg City, Ward 3.

1909: "Mr. Joseph Vernon Gills, formerly of this place, died on Newby Bridge Road, Chesterfield County, last Monday. He was 44 years of age, and is survived by his mother, his wife, who was Miss Lottie Godsey, and three children." ("The Farmville Herald"; Volume 19, Number 15, 5-5-1909. Presented by the Library of Virginia website.)

1920: U.S. Census showed widow "Lottie Estelle Gills" (age 46) living in Richmond's Madison Ward. (She was the head of household, living with a son and granddaughter.) The 1930 U.S. Census showed "Lottie Gills" (age 56) living in Richmond. (She was the head of household, living with a daughter and a son-in-law.)

Virginian Niece and Nephew of Brothers Sam and William Dunavant:
Lottie Estelle Godsey Gills (Born 1874 in Richmond, VA; Died After 1930)
Charles H. Godsey (Born 1866 in Richmond, VA; Probably Interred 1924 in Petersburg, VA)

The Godseys' Neighborhood: OREGON HILL

Oregon Hill is near the center of Richmond, VA. It was, and remains, an attractive middle class community located between Richmond's historic Hollywood Cemetery and Monroe Park - the tip of the fashionable Fan District. Containing more than twenty blocks, Oregon Hill consists mostly of two-story rowhomes, and semi-detached homes, built after the Civil War. Industry was thriving along the James River during the Reconstruction, and Oregon Hill was built to provide housing for skilled workers.

Godseys' Home: 127 S. LAUREL STREET

It appears that the Godseys' house still stands at the corner of South Laurel and Cumberland Streets. The street numbering appears to have changed, and it appears that the 3200 square foot house has been subdivided for multiple occupancy. (Such properties are in demand by the students attending Virginia Commonwealth University.) Historical information was provided by the National Historic Register Nomination for the Oregon Hill Historic District, approved in 1990. It recognized 127 South Laurel Street as being of "exceptional quality": "In contrast to the modest Pollard House, the masonry residences at 226-238 S. Cherry Street and at 125-127 S. Laurel Street ... are outstanding examples of design in the Victorian Italianate mode. The residences at 125-127 S. Laurel Street



This recent Google photo shows the probable home of Robert and Mollie Dunavant Godsey from 1889 (or earlier) to 1899 (or later). An obituary confirmed that Robert H. Godsey's family was living at this address when he died in 1889. Ten years later, the Godsey family was still living here when their only daughter, Lottie, married.

retain cresting and other exceptional ironwork, in addition to such refinements as string courses." Elsewhere in the historical nomination, the property is listed as "Circa 1890 - Freestanding brick Victorian Italianate dwelling with iron work."



Home of Robert H. Godsey and Mary "Mollie" Dunavant Godsey
Corner of South Laurel and Cumberland Streets, Oregon Hill Historic District, Richmond, Virginia

In 1841, Sarah Ann Dunavant, a daughter of William Henry Dunavant, was born in VA. Like her sister Mollie, she later lived in Richmond.

In 1894, a newspaper article mentioned that a "Sallie Hopkins" was visiting the family of S.D. Dunavant in Morganton, NC. This is the only known reference to any "Sallie" related to the Morganton Dunavants. Perhaps the newspaper misreported the name Sarah as Sallie. Another possible explanation: We know that Sarah's sister was known as Mollie, a common nickname for her formal name of Mary; it would then not be surprising if Sarah used the name Sallie, a common nickname for her own formal name. (To add to this confusion, see the two 1894 announcements below. The Morganton, NC, newspaper noted the visit of "Miss Sallie Hopkins" in August of 1894, then noted the departure of "Mrs. Hopkins" two months later.) Future research may determine whether William Henry Dunavant's daughter Sarah was indeed nicknamed Sallie.

We don't know if Sarah and Mollie were in Richmond during the Civil War. On April 2 of 1865, Richmond was evacuated at the Union forces approached. As the Confederate forces fled, they burned their own armory, warehouses and bridges. The fire spread out of control and consumed most of the business district.

We do know that Sarah and Mollie lived through the Reconstruction. It took Richmond decades to rebuild, and carpenters, like Sarah's husband, William W. Hopkins, would have been in great demand.

Below: "The Fall of Richmond"
Currier and Ives Lithograph, 1865.
Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York.



Snapshots from Newspapers and Census Reports

From the 1880 U.S. Census for Richmond, Henrico, Virginia (Pg. 442c):

Wm W. Hopkins 53 VA VA VA - Occupation: Carpenter

Sarah A. Hopkins 35 VA VA VA - Wife

Ann E. Hopkins 73 VA VA VA - Mother

From the "Catalogue of the Exhibits of Relics and Antiquities: At the Virginia Exposition, Oct. 3 - Nov. 21, 1888". (Richmond, VA; William Ellis Jones; 1888):

Entry: "English Pistol - over 100 years old, Mrs. W.W. Hopkins, Richmond."

From "The Richmond Dispatch" (Richmond, VA; 12-27-1891). Presented at the "Chronicling America" website of the Library of Congress:

"Mr. William H. Dunavant, of Buckingham County, is spending the holidays with his daughters, Mrs. R.H. Godsey and Mrs. William Hopkins, 1414 West Clay Street."

Virginian Sister of Brothers Sam and William Dunavant: Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins (1841-1908) Buckingham Co. and Richmond, VA

From "The Morganton Herald" (Morganton, NC; 8-23-1894):
"Miss Sallie Hopkins, of Richmond, Va., is visiting at Mr. S.D. Dunavant's."

From "The Morganton Herald" (Morganton NC, 10-25-1894). Posted at Newspapers.com:

"Mrs. Hopkins of Richmond, Va., who has been visiting her brother, Capt. S.D. Dunavant, left for her home last Thursday."

From the 1900 Census for Richmond, Clay Ward, Richmond City, VA (ED 58, Pg 4a):

Sarah Hopkins 55 7/1845 VA VA VA

Martha N Ellis 60 boarder 9/1839 VA VA VA

Added Note: This house was located beside the house of Sarah's sister, Mollie E Godsey, and Mollie's son, James Godsey.

From "The Richmond Dispatch" (Volume 1901; Number 15660; 6-30-1901). Presented at the website of the Library of Virginia:

"Mrs. A.E. Noble, of Nashville, Tenn., is visiting her sister-in-law, Mrs. S.A. Hopkins, 1414 West Clay Street, and her friend, Mrs. Rufus Pace, is with her, from the same place. They are on their way home from Baltimore."

Snapshots from Newspapers and Census Reports

From the 1880 U.S. Census for Richmond,
Henrico, VA (Pg. 442c):

Wm. W. Hopkins 53 - VA VA VA

Occupation: Carpenter

Sarah A. Hopkins 35 - VA VA VA - Wife

Ann E. Hopkins 73 - VA VA VA - Mother

From "The Richmond Dispatch"
(9-22-1893). Presented by the website
of VirginiaChronicle.com:

"HOPKINS - Died at his residence,
No. 1414 West Clay Street, Wednesday
morning. September 20, 1893, at
5:55 o'clock, Mr. W. W. Hopkins in his
66th year. Funeral will take place from
Grace Street Baptist Church Friday
evening at 3:30 o'clock. Friends and
acquaintances of the family invited to
attend. Memphis, Tenn. and Lynchburg,
Va., papers please copy."

Added Note:

1414 West Clay Street is located near
today's Virginia Commonwealth University.



William W. Hopkins, his second wife, Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins, and their daughter, Ada Belle Hopkins, were buried in the Oakwood Cemetery of Richmond, VA. The following inscriptions are legible on their gravestones:

Above Left: "Wm W Hopkins - Born June 1, 1827 -
Died Sept. 20, 1893 - In God's care."

Above Right: "In Memory of Sarah Ann Hopkins -
Born June 20, 1841 - Died May 27, 1908 -
I sleep in Jesus."



Daughter of William W. Hopkins and his
second wife, Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins:

ADA BELLE HOPKINS

"William W. Hopkins, b. 1828, d. Sept. 21,
1893 ... m. (2nd) Sarah Ann Dunnavant,
dau. of Wm. H. and Elizabeth (Warriner)
Dunnivant, of Buckingham Co., Va., prior
to 1865. They had one child only,
Ada Belle, who was b. in 1865 and
d. Jan. 28, 1878. She, her father and
mother were bu. in Oakwood Cemetery,
Richmond, Va."

From: "Hopkins of Virginia and Related Families:
Chapter III: Descendants of James M. Hopkins,
of James City Co., VA" (Walter Lee Hopkins; 1931)

Virginian Brother-In-Law of Sam and William Dunavant:
William W. Hopkins (1827-1893)
Richmond, VA



Richmond's Grace Street Baptist Church, formerly known as Third Baptist Church, was the church of the Godsey-Dunavant and the Hopkins-Dunavant families. This was confirmed by newspaper obituaries regarding Robert H. Godsey (in 1889) and William W. Hopkins (in 1893).

Shown here was the church's first structure at the corner of Grace and Foushee Streets, built in 1845. Two other structures followed until the church moved to Grove Avenue and Boulevard in 1923 and was renamed Grace Baptist Church.

(Church history and photo are from "Old Richmond Neighborhoods" by Mary Wingfield Scott)

Grace Street Baptist Church (Built 1845 - Demolished 1890)
Church of the Hopkins-Dunavant and Godsey-Dunavant Families
Corner of Grace and Foushee Streets in Richmond, VA

CHAPTER 4

Children of Samuel David Dunavant and Mary Virginia Corpening

Including Their Son:

HENRY JACKSON DUNAVANT,
(Railroad Contractor of Charlotte, NC)

And Their Daughter:

LILA DUNAVANT HENKEL
(Wife of Developer Columbus Vance Henkel I)

**From Morganton, NC to
Charlotte, Statesville, Asheville, Hickory
and Blowing Rock, NC**

Years: 1875 to 1960

Related Families: Wert (of TN), Henkel (of NC), Tomlin (of NC), Pritchett (of NC)

- "H.J. " and "Jack" both refer to Henry Jackson Dunavant.
- Historical newspaper articles usually referred to Henry Jackson Dunavant as "H.J. Dunavant".

When Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant moved to Charlotte, NC, in 1914, he found his new hometown to be an educational, financial, and banking center. Like Samuel David Dunavant (his father), and William Pemberton Dunavant, (his uncle), Jack Dunavant's early career focused on railroad contracting throughout the South. His later career included a variety of major construction projects in Western NC, including lakes, tunnels, and resorts.

In Charlotte, Jack Dunavant was president of the Carolina Crushed Stone Company and his wife would oversee the construction and initial management of the Carolina Golf Club. In Statesville, Jack and Columbus Vance Henkel were directors of the Henkel Live Stock Co., and in Blowing Rock, they were members of the Blowing Rock Development Company - which bought the historic Green Park Hotel, now known as the Green Park Inn, and added a golf course designed by Donald J. Ross.



**North
Carolina
Dunavants
(1907)**

This photo, from the family collection of Louise Wert Dunavant, was simply labeled "Dunavants". Capt. Samuel "Sam" David Dunavant died in 1906. This photo, dated 1907, would therefore have included his sons.

Prior to 1913, when Henry Ford's mass production began, car ownership was a rare and expensive luxury.



DUNAVANT, HENRY JACKSON, Railroad Builder and Capitalist

Descended of an honored family whose members found distinction in many worthy walks of life's endeavors, Henry Jackson Dunavant had within himself the blue blood of the Southland, together with all its traditions of gentility and chivalry, intelligence and integrity.

There was wealth in the family, shared unevenly amongst its various lines, and through the fore part of his years, up to the time of his early youth, he had every advantage possible to a boy of foremost circumstances. Those were happy days indeed, and never did he forget them to the very end of his life. He resided then at Morganton, North Carolina, where for a long time the family had its seat; and the friends of his boyhood became the friends of youth and manhood, never deserting him throughout his existence, rallying to him in darker moments when the future seemed so uncertain as to be threatening.

Here we treat of a life in no wise of the ordinary.

In the usual course a lad is born into the world with quite ordinary means, then progresses, evenly, steadily toward his ambition, and either fails to achieve it or does so achieve. But in the case of Henry Jackson Dunavant the frequently maligned "silver spoon" may be said to have been present, only to be lost at the hand of a fate over which he had no control and when regained, by some alchemy of character and worth, this silver spoon had turned to gold.

His battle upward was assisted by numbers of his faithful friends, yet, as is always the case in such affairs, what was accomplished may be attributed almost wholly to his own dauntless effort. H. J. Dunavant became one of the leading builders of all the Southland, where his forefathers had constantly held sway.

His building operations were confined for the most part to the building of railroads, and many of his more important contracts will be cited hereafter in this biography. There were many persons who acknowledged him to be the dominant railroad builder in the North Carolina area, if not of the entire South.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant: Published Biography (Part 1 of 4; Verbatim)

From American Biography – A New Cyclopedia, Volume 42, 1930. Editor: William Richard Cutter.
(Published under the direction of the American Historical Society.)

His interests ramified immensely as middle years came on, and at the time of his death these comprised a vast manner of contact with the business world. His memory is preserved close to the hearts of all who knew him at all intimately, and to those who respected him, and who are legion in number.

Particularly he is remembered by the people of North Carolina, and his employees, whom he called his own and to whom he was unfailingly loyal at all times; and of all these people in North Carolina, perhaps he is recalled with deepest affection by those of his boyhood town, together with those of Charlotte, who knew him as a man of accomplished fact.

Captain Sam Dunavant, father of Henry Jackson Dunavant, was a son of Dr. John Dunavant*, and fought with valor in the Civil War. He was a native of Amelia County, Virginia; there was reared; and married, in Burke County, North Carolina, Virginia Corpening, native of that county. Captain Sam Dunavant was a man of large affairs, and had a wide reputation as contractor and builder, especially as pertaining to the building of railroads and railroad work in general. With his wife he raised a considerable family of children, of whom in this record we are concerned with Henry Jackson Dunavant. *(*Added Note: This was incorrect. We've confirmed that Capt. Sam Dunavant was a son of William Henry Dunavant.)*

Captain Sam Dunavant's brother, William Dunavant, was an influential and wealthy railroad president, and moved to Memphis, Tennessee.

Henry Jackson Dunavant was born on the family estate in Burke County, North Carolina, July 14, 1875, and attended private schools at Morganton. He progressed through the elementary work and had attacked the secondary studies with an innate vigor when misfortune came to his father, who had involved himself in contracts with the Three Cs Railroad upon which he lost ninety thousand dollars almost overnight. At that time such a sum represented great wealth, and even now might well alter the plans of any family. Henry Jackson Dunavant was fourteen years of age, sound of body, quick of mind, and a willing worker. He understood at once the difference that this turn in fortune would bring to him, and leaving books behind for the time went to work at paving streets, in Morganton, where before he had been a carefree lad at his studies. (This pavement which he built is still in fine condition.)

This early work did him good in more ways than one. It strengthened his body for the battle of life in rapid time, and gave him a practical foundation for observation of building problems. During that year, also, he joined in association with his father, who taught him a great deal about building and contracting. When he came into his own as a contractor, he went into partnership with his father, and their association continued until the death of the elder member.

From his fifteenth year, Henry Jackson Dunavant was identified with building as a contractor; and with each new year came new prestige, adding fortune, and augmented reputation at his work.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant: Published Biography (Part 2 of 4; Verbatim)

From American Biography – A New Cyclopedia, Volume 42, 1930. Editor: William Richard Cutter.
(Published under the direction of the American Historical Society.)

He was, at the time of his demise, president of the Carolina Crushed Stone Company, of which he was the founder; president of the Dunavant Company, of which he was the founder; president of the Dunavant- Gunter Company, L. C. Gunter having been a life-long friend and associate; president of Clement Dunavant Company; and president of the T. J. Galley Company, which, in 1928, is still engaged in building up the embankments of the Mississippi River.

Items of building accomplished by Henry Jackson Dunavant herebefore indicated for citation are impressive. He built the Knoxville, Cumberland Gap and Louisville Railroad, which is now part of the Southern Railroad, in 1890; then the Three Cs Railroad (Charleston, Cincinnati and Chicago) which has since been brought to full completion; and then the Carolina and North Western Railroad, from Lenoir, North Carolina, to Chester, South Carolina, in 1894.

At the age of nineteen years he went with his father to Jamaica, South America, where they built a railroad and immense tunnel. He built the "Lumber Road," now known as the Virginia Railroad, in Fayette County, West Virginia. This line is five miles long, and has a tunnel three hundred feet long. He was the contractor for the railroad built by Dr. Seward Webb of the Vanderbilt family, in the Adirondack Mountains, New York, afterward sold to the New York Central system. He built the Warrior Southern Railroad, near Tuscaloosa, Alabama, in 1902-03, five miles in length with two tunnels, a branch of the Mobile and Ohio Railroad; The North Carolina and St. Louis Railroad, through Tracy City, Tennessee, 1903-04, of eight miles; the Cincinnati Southern Railroad, from Somerset to Burnside, Kentucky, six miles of heavy rock work. It was heavy rock work which always gave pleasure to Mr. Dunavant. In this instance there were one hundred and fifty thousand yards of crushed rock used for ballast. He built the Southern Railway's branch from Bulls Gap to Rogersville, Tennessee, 1909-10, twelve miles of heavy work; and the trackage for the Big Four (Chicago, Cleveland, Cincinnati and St. Louis), at Evansville, Indiana, 1909-10.

In 1910 Dunavant-Gunter partnership was formed, and the firm built trackage ways from Birmingham and Warrior, Alabama, 1912-14, of five miles. They then double tracked the Southern Railroad from Washington to Atlanta, and to Tye River, Virginia, 1914-15, a distance of fifteen miles. And from Greenville, South Carolina, to Easley, 1916-17, sixteen miles; from Gaffney to Cowpers, South Carolina, 1917-1918, twelve miles; and from Cornelia to Airsville, 1916-17, ten miles. He contracted for the Stripping Phosphate fields in Florida, at Bowling Green, 1920-21.

When he founded and established the business of the Carolina Crushed Stone Company at Charlotte, he did the grading required for the Ford plant in Charlotte, 1923-24, and did three miles of heavy work for the Central of Georgia Railroad at Jackson Gap, Alabama, 1925-26.

Mr. Dunavant brought the Lake Lure Dam to completion just before his last and fatal illness. This is one of the finest dams in the world, with the new cylindrical and moveable sections and was built at a cost of \$1,000,000. It was completed in 1927, having been begun in 1926.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant: Published Biography (Part 3 of 4; Verbatim)

From American Biography – A New Cyclopedia, Volume 42, 1930. Editor: William Richard Cutter.
(Published under the direction of the American Historical Society.)

The Beaucatcher Tunnel, at Asheville, North Carolina, was begun in 1927, and is now under construction. This is to be a paved highway under Beaucatcher Mountain and will cost more than one-half million dollars. His company, of which he was a member, is building highway bridges near Statesville, North Carolina.

With his father in earlier years he built the tunnels and laid the trackage for the Southern Railroad from Morganton to Asheville (main line of the Southern Railroad).

At all times generous and charitable toward mankind, Henry Jackson Dunavant was most affectionately regarded by all who came in contact with him, and especially so by his employees. He was ever faithful and patient to his employees and expected faithfulness from them, but even when he found them unworthy he would not let them go until it was demonstrated beyond a shadow of doubt, that such was the only course. Liberal almost to a fault, he contributed to all causes for man's happiness and welfare. During the World War he was of valued assistance in the various campaigns for funds, and of even more valued assistance through his ability to construct good railroads.

He was a member of the Charlotte Rotary Club and Chamber of Commerce, the Charlotte Country Club, and the Myers Park Country Club; the Engineers' Club, and the Southern Manufacturers' Club.

Henry Jackson Dunavant married, at Chattanooga, Tennessee, on January 22, 1908, Louise Wert, of that city. Miss Wert was the daughter to the late Frank O. and Lucy Price (Crow) Wert. Frank O. Wert was the son of Michael Wert, and descended from William Wert, a contemporary of Thomas Jefferson. He was a prominent barrister of Chattanooga, where he spent most of his life. To Mr. and Mrs. Dunavant were born three children, the first two, Louise Wert and Samuel Jackson, were twins, born October 3, 1909, at Charlotte; graduates of Central High School, Charlotte; and Virginia, now a student. The family residence is at No. *610 Queens Road, Myers Park, Charlotte. Samuel Jackson, the only son, and a capable well-meaning youth, will try to follow in the paths of his illustrious parent. (** The address would later become 1040 Queens Road.*)

Henry Jackson Dunavant died after an illness of two years, during which he continued courageously with his career, to the very end. Death came to him June 8, 1928, at the age of fifty-two years, at Cleveland Springs, North Carolina, while he was on a trip for his health.

In the fifty-two years of his life, Henry Jackson Dunavant lived the facts, the triumphs, and perhaps the sorrows, of one hundred. There lives no one to say that a career so full was idly spent, or to detract from the greatness of a character so worthy.

The tremendous works by him accomplished cannot fail to live through many generations: and it can be said further that his laurels are an honor to an honorable family.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant: Published Biography (Part 4 of 4; Verbatim)

From American Biography – A New Cyclopedia, Volume 42, 1930. Editor: William Richard Cutter.

(Published under the direction of the American Historical Society.)



Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Steam Shovel

(This photo was in the family collection of Louise Wert Dunavant. Its caption: "Steam shovel in action at Warrior, May, June 1912". Mr. Dunavant is known to have built a section of the Warrior Southern Railroad near Tuscaloosa, Alabama.)

The "Charlotte NC City Directory 1927" listed "Clement-Dunavant Co." ("General Contractors") at "712-715 Coml Bank Bldg", with H.J. Dunavant named as president. H.J. Dunavant was also listed as vice-president of the Southern Realty Co. at 120 Brevard Ct. (Archive.org)

The "Charlotte NC City Directory 1928" listed "Clement, Dunavant & Gunter Inc." ("Engineering Contrs") at the same address, with H.J. Dunavant again named as president. (Mocavo.com)



The historic postcard image above shows the Commercial National Bank Building in Charlotte, later known as the NC Nat'l Bank Bldg.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant was, undoubtedly, a successful developer, builder, and realtor of the New South. His life spanned the Second Industrial Revolution and the "Roaring 1920's". Like his father, Samuel David Dunavant, and his uncle, William Pemberton Dunavant, Jack's early career focused on railroad contracting throughout the South. His later career included a wider variety of major construction projects in Western NC, including lakes, tunnels, and resorts.

In addition to completing many major projects, Jack also had some ongoing business interests. In Charlotte, he was president of the Carolina Crushed Stone Co. In Statesville, he and Columbus Vance Henkel were directors of the Henkel Live Stock Co. In Blowing Rock, Dunavant and Henkel were members of the Blowing Rock Development Company, which bought the historic Green Park Hotel (now known as the Green Park Inn) and added a golf course designed by Donald J. Ross.

From the Professional Journal, Steam Shovel and Dredge, Vol. 19, 1915:

"Dunavant & Co. are making great headway on their work at Tye River, VA, which, it is said, will soon be shut down temporarily, waiting for some bridge work to be completed. **Mr. Dunavant ... is a man who is great on organizing work, and 'Results' is his middle name. Mr. Dunavant gained much prominence a few years ago by the rapidity with which he completed his work in Alabama on the Louisville & Nashville.**"

Some Earlier Projects Outside of NC:

- Jamaica: Worked with father, Sam Dunavant, on the Jamaica Railway (1894)
- AL: Louisville & Nashville Railroad (About 1912; Gained Prof. Recognition)
- VA: Southern Railway Section Between Tye River and Elma (1914)
- MS: Rosa Lumber Co. Mill in Picayune (1914)
- TN: H.J. Dunavant & Co. operated out of Chattanooga and Knoxville. (1908-1914).

Jack's biography provides a more complete listing, including projects in SC, FL, PA, NY, and KY. Jack did business under the names of "H.J. Dunavant & Co."; "Dunavant & Gunter, Inc.", and "Clements, Dunavant & Gunter Construction Co".

(Jack's biography described L.C. Gunter as a life-long friend and business associate. They completed many projects together, including a spur for the Rosa Lumber Co. Mill in Picayune, Mississippi, in 1914.)

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Professional Life Throughout NC and the South

Some Later Projects in NC:

- Mecklenburg County: Purchased 4000 acres of land (1910's). Built a substantial home for his family in Charlotte's Myers Park community (1915). Also in Charlotte, founded the Carolina Crushed Stone Co. (In 1925, Jack was serving as the company's president and his wife, as treasurer.)
- Blowing Rock: With partners, bought the historic Green Park Hotel and added the Green Park-Norwood Golf Course (1918). That course is now part of the Blowing Rock Country Club.
- Henderson County: Built the Lake Summit Dam to provide more power for the mills of Spartanburg, SC (1920).
- Rutherford County: Built the first great dam of recreational Lake Lure (1926).
- Asheville, Buncombe County: Clements, Dunavant and Gunter Construction Co. built the automobile tunnel through Beaucatcher Mountain – giving Asheville critical access from the east. (Construction began in 1927.)

Secretary of **H. J. Dunavant,**
 Railroad Contractor.
 Home Address
 Morganton, N. C.
 Estimated by Russell & Co. Mableton, Ga. 7-5-1906.
 Estimates as follows:
 Atlanta Belt Line Estimate for July, 05. - 509,447
 Bayton & Westall Estimate for May, 06. 716,429
 76,737.76
 H. J. Dunavant

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Professional Life

The page above appeared in Sam Dunavant's estate file. It appears that Sam and his son, Jack Dunavant, worked together on a project in Mableton, GA. This stationery shows that, in 1906, Jack was still based in his hometown of Morganton, NC. In 1908, he married Louise Wert in her hometown of Chattanooga, TN. In 1914, Jack and Louise would settle their family in Charlotte, NC, near Jack's sister in Statesville.

In 1875, Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant was born and reared in Morganton, NC. His father, Samuel David Dunavant, had been born in Farmville, VA. His mother, Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant, was descended from the Corpening family – early settlers of Burke Co. whose land was in Bridgewater, west of Morganton.

In 1908, Jack married Louise Wert in her hometown of Chattanooga, TN. Jack and Louise had three children: twins Louise and Samuel Jackson Dunavant I, and their younger sister, Virginia. From about 1908 to 1914, "H.J. Dunavant & Co." operated out of Chattanooga and Knoxville, TN. During the early 1910's, however, Jack also bought 4000 acres in southwestern Mecklenburg Co., NC, which included the Blackman Dairy Farm. (He intended to use the land as a rock quarry but left much of it untouched.) By 1914, he had returned from TN to his home state of NC and his family settled in Charlotte.

Despite his hectic work schedule, Jack regularly attended family and social events. After returning to NC, he was closer to his siblings in the neighboring towns. He remained close to his sister, Lila Dunavant Henkel of Statesville. (In his later years, local newspapers mentioned their visits.)

Jack's brothers were Samuel "DeWitt" Dunavant of Hickory and "Maurice" Virginius Dunavant of Charlotte and Asheville. Jack would occasionally travel with his wife. They went sightseeing in Cuba ("Charlotte Observer"; 1-20-1920), and social announcements mentioned their trips to Blowing Rock, NC; Florida; Washington, DC; and New York City (GenealogyBank.com). Family members also recall that a group that included Louise Wert Dunavant took a European tour.

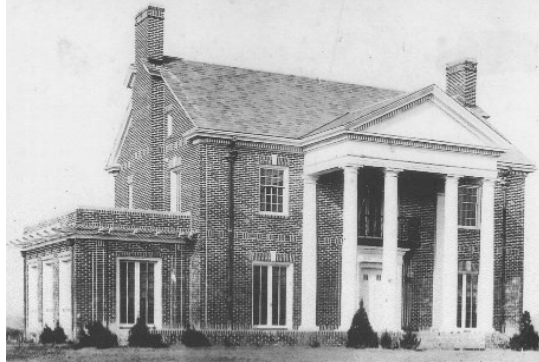


Early Photo of the Dunavants' Home on a Snowy Day
Corner of Queens Road and Ardsley Road
in Myers Park, Charlotte, NC

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Personal Life **Morganton and Charlotte, NC**

By 1914, Henry Jackson Dunavant had returned from TN to his home state of NC. The "Charlotte Observer" (9-19-1915) stated: "Mr. Dunavant came to Charlotte twelve months ago from the head offices of the firm in Knoxville, TN, with the idea of only a temporary stay. Finding the Queen City a strategic point for his work, he has decided to locate permanently and will shortly erect a handsome residence in Myers Park."

Which is exactly what he did. Jack commissioned one of the earlier homes in Charlotte's planned suburb, Myers Park. On 9-21-1915, the "Charlotte Observer" stated: "Mr. H.J. Dunavant let the contract yesterday to Mr. R.L. Goode for a handsome residence in Myers Park. Work will start today." The home, shown here, still stands at the intersection of Queens Road and Ardsley Road. The street address numbering apparently changed some time after H.J.'s death. His death certificate (1928), his wife's DAR Application (1928), and his published biography (1930) all stated his home address as 610 Queens Road, but for decades now, the home's address has been 1040 Queens Road. (Family records show that Jack Dunavant was the original owner.) Family lore holds that Jack's company was involved in the development of Myers Park, but that has not been confirmed. During the 1920's, Myers Park would become one of the South's wealthiest communities.



Left:
Dunavant
Home,
shown before
1920.



Below:
Dunavants'
former home,
as it appears
today.



The house is listed as one of the older contributing buildings in the Myers Park Historic District.

The original interior was described by family members as elegant - with large rooms, tall ceilings, mahogany paneling, and multiple fireplaces.

Jack's daughter, Virginia Ann Dunavant Robertson Turner, enlarged the house, adding a kitchen behind the sun parlor, and finished space above.

The house currently contains 5100 square feet.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Home in Myers Park, Charlotte, NC



Green Park Hotel (Historical Postcard Photo)
(One of the South's Oldest Continuously Operated Hotels)



Green Park Inn Today

The property welcomed guests continuously for 118 years - from 1891 to 2009. Famous guests included John D. Rockefeller, Herbert Hoover, Calvin Coolidge, Annie Oakley, Eleanor Roosevelt, Margaret Mitchell, and Marilyn Monroe. In 2009, the Green Park Inn foreclosed during the Great Recession: that same year, the inn and its 3826 acres were sold at auction for \$1,660,000. In 2011, after making substantial renovations, the new owners, brothers Eugene and Stephen Irace of NY, reopened the Green Park Inn.

Vacation Home of the Dunavant, Henkel and Robertson Families Blowing Rock Historic District, Watauga and Caldwell Counties, NC

The Green Park Hotel, today called the Green Park Inn, opened in Blowing Rock, NC in 1891. Long before the Civil War, the scenic mountains of Western NC, the highest on the East Coast, had hosted summer resorts for the wealthy families of NC, SC and GA. Families spent entire summers in the mountains to avoid the heat of the lower altitudes. Bustling entourages – parents, grandparents, children, maids, and valets – arrived with tons of trunks. The hotel was like a town of its own, with its own doctor, post office, and casino.

The Dunavant and Henkel families had financial and social interests in the Green Park Hotel. Lila Dunavant was married to Columbus Vance Henkel I. C.V. Henkel and Lila's brother, Jack Dunavant of Charlotte, were investors. During the 1910's, they and others formed the Blowing Rock Development Co. and acquired the Green Park Hotel. In 1915, they commissioned renowned golf architect Donald J. Ross to add a nine hole golf course - later known as the Green Park - Norwood Golf Course. The golf course opened in 1918, and in 1922, an additional nine holes were cleared. In 1939, a group of "cottagers" leased the golf course and the Blowing Rock Country Club was created. (The golf course is now owned by the Blowing Rock Country Club, not the Green Park Inn.) Vacationing at Blowing Rock remained a Dunavant and Henkel tradition for generations. The granddaughter of C.V. and Lila Dunavant Henkel, Lila Saunders Spilman, married Lawrence Samuel Rankin Jr. in Blowing Rock, and she spent her summers there ("Gaston Gazette" Obituary of 6-12-2009).

A National Register of Historic Places nomination for the Green Park Historic District (1994) stated that the "Jack Dunavant Cottage", a bungalow built in the 1920's at 6132 Gideon Ridge Drive, was probably built for H.J. Dunavant ("brother of Lila Dunavant Henkel") by Charles Moody. It also stated that the "Henkel Family Cottage" was located at 6181 Pinnacle Ave.

Members of the Robertson family, of Charlotte, NC, also summered at Blowing Rock. Julia Johnston Robertson (1878-1966), who usually stayed at the Mayview Manor, contributed to the original Blowing Rock Hospital. The Robertson family was also connected to Western NC through the marriage of Margaret Louisa Hunt and William Ross Robertson II in 1907. (Margaret was the daughter of Dr. Charles Washington Hunt I of Brevard, Transylvania Co.)

Sources: [1] a website of the former Green Park Inn; [2] an article, "The Craig House", published by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission; [3] a Wikipedia entry; [4] a notice by "The Watauga Democrat" (8-21-2009); and [5] an article by Monte Mitchell in the "Winston Salem Journal" (7-18-2009).

One of Henry Jackson Dunavant's Final Major Projects: The Lake Lure Dam, Near Chimney Rock, Rutherford County, NC



Jack Dunavant's company built the first major dam creating Lake Lure near Chimney Rock. Dam construction started in 1925 and the lake was filled by 1927. Also in 1927, the Lake Lure Inn was built. (According to its website, the inn once hosted Franklin D. Roosevelt, F. Scott Fitzgerald, Emily Post and Calvin Coolidge.) Aside from the lodge, the lake itself is famous. Named "one of the ten most beautiful man-made lakes in the world" by National Geographic, it lies in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, 27 miles from Asheville under the towering Chimney Rock. Lake Lure was a filming location for scenes from many movies, including Dirty Dancing, Forrest Gump, and The Last of the Mohicans.

From "The Forest City Courier" (3-19-1925; Verbatim; Presented by Newspapers.DigitalNC.org):

WORK TO START ON LAKE LURE: Contract Re-Awarded For Construction of Dam and Power Plant

Contract for the construction of the Lake Lure dam and power plant at Chimney Rock has been re-awarded to the Dunavant-Gunter company and the E. H. Clement company, of Charlotte, joint bidders, according to announcement by officials of Chimney Rock Mountains, Inc., at Charlotte Saturday.

John A. Gardner, who was the successful bidder at the letting which took place two weeks ago, notified the company that he would not be able to carry out the contract and it became necessary for the company to re-let the contract to other parties. Mr. Gardner had posted a cashier's check at the time he made his bid and that check had been forfeited by him.

The total cost of the dam and power plant will run approximately \$700,000, based on complete bids now let for all materials and labor, it is understood.

"The present award," said Dr. Morse, "is made to the strongest possible combination of experienced dam and power plant contractors, and is highly satisfactory to the company in every respect." The Dunavant-Gunter and E. H. Clement companies, while not permanently associated, have joined hands on the job for the purpose of speedily completing the contract. The Dunavant-Gunter company has been widely known throughout the south for 30 years as prominent railroad and bridge contractors, having done a large share of the work of the Southern railroad double tracking project through the Carolinas. The E. H. Clement company has just completed the raising of the Wateree dam in South Carolina for the Southern Power company.

"Steps have already been taken," said Mr. Clement, "to push the work to rapid completion. Our fall erection and construction equipment, consisting of crushers, concrete mixers and all others necessary equipment is being loaded at Lugall, S. C., the site of our just completed job and will be unloaded at Rutherfordton and hauled to the Lake Lure dam site during the next two weeks."

Mees and Mees, hydraulic engineers of Charlotte, have designed the Lake Lure dam and power plant and will have supervision of the construction work, which will create a mammoth resort lake in the Chimney Rock section.



Historical photo posted at a website by Tatanka, Realty Developers of Lake Lure.

Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Lake Lure Project in Western NC



Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant's Final Days in Western NC

Above: Dunavant Mausoleum in the Elmwood Cemetery of Charlotte, NC.
Henry Jackson Dunavant was interred there with his wife Louise Wert Dunavant, his daughter Virginia Ann Dunavant Robertson Turner, and his sister-in-law Aubin Lee Wert.

Following two years of declining health, the life of Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant ended on June 8, 1928. His life had been successful by many measures: He had a wife and three children. He had enjoyed professional recognition, social standing, and wealth.

On June 8, 1928, Jack Dunavant, a prominent Charlotte contractor and railroad builder, died at Cleveland Springs, a resort near Shelby, Cleveland Co., NC. He had been in ill health for two years and had been resting at the resort for several months. His grandchildren remembered Jack's illness as heart-related. (His uncle had died of painful "dropsy", an older term often used to describe edema related to congestive heart failure.) Jack was survived by his widow, three children (Virginia Ann Dunavant and twins Samuel Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant), sister Lila Dunavant Henkel (Mrs. Columbus Vance Henkel) of Stateville, brother Maurice Dunavant of Charlotte and brother DeWitt Dunavant of Hickory. Funeral services were held at the family's Myers Park residence in Charlotte.

Considering Henry Jackson Dunavant's many accomplishments, we can reflect on his legacy. One of his final completed projects, Lake Lure, remains a popular destination today. In fact, many of his civic projects (railroads, lakes, tunnels, and resorts) are still enjoyed today throughout Charlotte, Western NC, and the South. His long professional career improved the lives of many people, from the Southern states to Jamaica.

Cleveland Springs was a landmark in Shelby from the early 1800's until it burned in 1929. The 221 acre resort hosted guests from the South and from Europe.
(Rusty Patterson, Cleveland Co. Archivist)

In the 1920's, Jack Dunavant was the president of the Carolina Crushed Stone Co., a business located in downtown Charlotte. A street near his property was named Dunavant Street. (The street's current marker is shown below.)

In 2015, plans for a proposed office building, "Dunavant Place," are in development by Overcash Demmitt Architects for 2418 Dunavant Street. A light rail line runs nearby - an appropriate reminder of the area's past association with one of Charlotte's early railroad contractors.





Louise Wert Dunavant
 (Left Photo Taken About 1904 in Chattanooga, TN;
 Right Photo Taken After 1908)
 Born 1886 in Chattanooga, TN; Died 1967 in Charlotte, NC
 Daughter of Frank Owen Wert and Lucy Price Crow (Both of AL and TN)
 Wife of Henry Jackson Dunavant
 Mother of Louise Wert Dunavant Alexander (Twin),
 Samuel Jackson Dunavant I (Twin),
 and Virginia Ann Dunavant Robertson Turner

Founder and Owner of the Carolina Golf Club

The land today occupied by the Carolina Golf Club, at 2415 Old Steele Creek Road in Charlotte, NC, was formerly the Blackman Dairy Farm. During the first decade of the 1900's, a man from the western part of the state, Henry Jackson Dunavant, bought 4,000 acres of land in S.W. Mecklenburg Co. which included the dairy. Dunavant's business was heavy construction and he sought the land for a rock quarry, however, he died in 1928 and left much of the land untouched and in the trust of his wife.

Following her husband's death, Mrs. Dunavant needed to find a way to provide for her family. Ten years earlier, her husband had hired nationally known Donald Ross to design the golf course at the Green Park Hotel in Blowing Rock. Mrs. Dunavant would likely have also seen Ross's courses at the Charlotte Country Club (built 1913) and at the Eseeola Lodge (Linville Golf Club) near Burke Co. (built 1924). And so in 1928, Mrs. Dunavant boldly decided to lease land from the trust and retain Ross again to design Charlotte's first golf course for public use. She chose a site near NC's first paved four-lane highway, Wilkinson Boulevard, located between the banking center of Charlotte and the textile mills of Gaston County. The Carolina Golf Club opened to the public in 1929 and it survived the following Great Depression! First managed by Mrs. Dunavant and her son, Jack Dunavant, it became a prosperous family business. In 1934, Mrs. Dunavant's son-in-law, William Sutton Alexander I, became the manager and he stayed with the club until his death in 1959. In 1958, the course was sold to its members and it became a private club. Recently renovated for \$10.2 million, the Carolina Golf Club continues to thrive.

Sources: (1) "Golf and the Country Landscape", an article by the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Historic Landmarks Commission; and (2) "A Widow's Will", a booklet written by William Sutton Alexander II in 2010.

Published Genealogist and National Committee Chair of the Daughters of the American Revolution

Louise Wert Dunavant served as the National Chair of the DAR's Genealogical Records Committee. As "Mrs. H.J. Dunavant", she published her research of her Cowan ancestry from Lancaster Co., PA to NC - which included the Cherokee killing of Continental Army Major John Cowan in East TN and the 7-year Indian captivity of Cowan's wife, Mary Walker. (The Cowans were the family of Mrs. Dunavant's paternal grandmother.) Much of Mrs. Dunavant's research was reportedly used by John K. Fleming in his 1971 book, The Cowans from County Down (Derrith Publishing Co., Raleigh, NC).

Louise Wert Dunavant
Wife of Henry Jackson Dunavant
Charlotte, NC

On her DAR application, Louise Wert Dunavant claimed descentance, through her mother Lucy Price Crow, from Joseph White (born 1724 in Edgecomb Co., NC; died 1807 in Anson Co., NC). He was recognized by the DAR as a Rev. War Patriot and his wife was named Elizabeth (1730-1795). (Later researchers have proposed that Elizabeth's last name was Leeth).



Walter, Skidmore, Sutt Alexander I, Lou Alexander, Carrie Lasley at banquet to honor Sutt Sr. for his contributions to the game of golf.



Sutt Alexander I, Louise Dunavant Alexander, and the Carolina Golf Club of Charlotte, NC

From 1929-1933, Louise Wert Dunavant and her son, Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant, created and successfully launched the Carolina Golf Club during the Great Depression. Following that, for more than two decades, Mrs. Dunavant's son-in-law, William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander I, successfully managed, improved and transitioned the public club into a private club.

Sutt was an accomplished athlete. His love of football had begun as he played for Charlotte's Central High School, the state championship team during Sutt's senior year. (Sutt and Louise Dunavant first met during their high school years.) Sutt then attended Centre College of Kentucky on a football scholarship. While there, he also became interested in golf. He would become a noted amateur golfer and a protégé of PGA professional Jack Burke Sr. His senior year, Sutt qualified for and won the Kentucky Collegiate State Golf Championship. The 1929 Centre College Yearbook listed Sutt as captain of the football team, Carnival King, Vice President of the Senior Class, a member of Phi Delta Kappa, and described him as "happy-go-lucky and with a host of friends, he is just a good fellow."

Following college graduation, Sutt returned to Charlotte's Central High School to coach their football team, along with Coach Walter Skidmore. He later joined Myers Sporting Goods, and after that, he began to manage the Mammoth Oaks Golf Club, an old sand greens course formerly located at Providence and Sardis Roads. In 1934, Mrs. Louise Wert Dunavant convinced Sutt to leave Mammoth Oaks and run the Carolina Golf Club. A year later, Sutt married Mrs. Dunavant's daughter Louise, or "Lou" as she was called. Following World War II, Sutt resumed management of the Carolina Golf Club. On 2-1-1946, the "Charlotte Observer" announced, "Charlotte's 'Mr. Golf' plans extensive improvements at the Carolina Course, the only 18-hole public course in the area."

The transition of the Carolina Golf Club (CGC) into a private club was heavily influenced by the competitive nature of its golfers. In late 1957 and early 1958, some of the regular CGC players were denied permission to compete in Carolina Golf Association tournaments. The rules at the time categorized CGC's golfers as public course players, rather than the "gentleman golfers" who would normally belong to a private club. This aroused the ire of Sutt Alexander I so he and others worked out a solution: a group of regular CGC players put up \$2.00 each to start a club: Carolina Golf Club was in business and its members were then eligible to compete in the events of the Carolina Golf Assn.

Sutt Alexander I died on 10-20-1959, at age 53. His wife, Louise Dunavant Alexander, died in 1964.

(Information and photos were adapted from, "A Widow's Will", by William Sutton Alexander II.)

The article below appeared in the 1-12-1933 edition of a New York newspaper, "The Niagara Falls Gazette". It's based on an interview with Louise Wert "Mrs. H.J." Dunavant. The article's headline, shown right, contained a drawing of the Carolina Golf Club's original clubhouse. The golf course opened successfully during the Great Depression.

"Charlotte, North Carolina. Mrs. H.J. Dunavant, the only woman in the world to build and operate an 18-hole golf course, literally has followed a fairway to farm relief."



Less than three years ago, widowed, she found herself with a 200-acre farm, cropped to death, without a single building in any sort of repair - eating itself up in taxes.

Today, she is the sole owner and proprietor of the only public championship golf course within 70 miles of this city, a beautiful rolling layout of verdant greens, thick woods, and smooth fairways.

She is finally independent, has never operated in the "red" a day since the course was thrown open to an impatient public in September of 1931. From her clubhouse, a rambling log structure put together by day labor from material at hand, she sends forth as many as 200 golfers a day.

"I was pretty well discouraged," she recalled, as she sat in front of the big stone fireplace during a lull in business. "We couldn't even get good roasting ears off the place. Then I happened to hear people talking about a championship golf course in their community - somewhere in Texas, I believe."

"Call it inspiration if you like, but it flashed over me right then that I might convert my seemingly worthless farm into such a course."

"I saw the arid fields, the endless rubbish, the washes as deep as a house, and it looked pretty hopeless. But I looked again and saw a rolling hillside, a hazardous creek bed and a background of towering pines. I made up my mind."

The first thing Mrs. Dunavant did was send for Donald J. Ross, a renowned golf architect. He came, saw and marveled. It was, he said, a natural layout, except that it was just a little too small.

The next day, Mrs. Dunavant bought an adjoining 20 acres from a startled neighbor. He questioned her sanity, perhaps, but he took her money before she could change her mind.

From there on, it was just hard work, a job that may be appreciated only by one who has built a golf course. The land had to be cleared ...

Louise Wert Dunavant: History of the Carolina Golf Club (Part 1 of 2)

Charlotte, NC

The article below appeared in the 1-12-1933 edition of a New York newspaper, "The Niagara Falls Gazette". It's based on an interview with Louise Wert "Mrs. H.J." Dunavant. The article's headline, shown right, contained a drawing of the Carolina Golf Club's original clubhouse. The golf course opened successfully during the Great Depression.

"Charlotte, North Carolina. Mrs. H.J. Dunavant, the only woman in the world to build and operate an 18-hole golf course, literally has followed a fairway to farm relief."



an enormous task, and everything that could possibly be of use salvaged. Enough scrap iron was found to be wrought into all the hardware needed. A well was dug, plumbing installed, the creek dammed to form a lake and 12,300 feet of pipe laid to supply water for the greens and fairways. A mile of road was built to connect with the main highway. Countless tons of fertilizer were worked into the poor land.

Exactly a year after Mrs. Dunavant launched her adventure, the 6228-yard course was opened to the public. Its 18 beautiful greens, designed by Ross, in perfect condition and the fairways coated with grass. Mrs. Dunavant's only son left college to help her get the enterprise underway, and has not gone back. Today, in addition to him, the Carolina Golf Club regularly employs a cashier, a golf professional, green-keeper, caddie master, eight helpers and a maid, with Mrs. Dunavant ever vigilant to see that her course is conducted efficiently. Though she is not a golfer herself, Mrs. Dunavant is keenly awake to her job. She recently engaged Walter Hagen and Joe Kirkwood, noted professionals, for an exhibition match over the course. And social interest has been stimulated by a series of "Ladies Days", when a professional in contract bridge gives free lessons in the clubhouse.

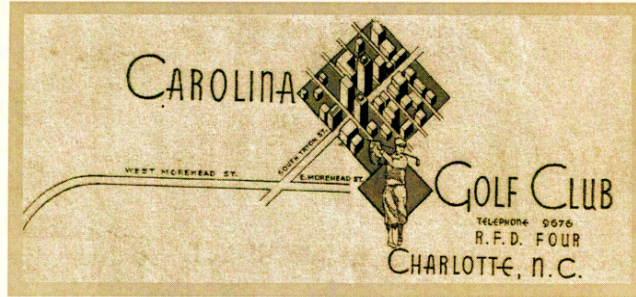


Added Photos from Sutt Alexander II:
Left: Blackman Dairy Worker at the site of the future clubhouse of the CGC.
Right (1932): Ladies standing in front of clubhouse include:
- Louise Wert Dunavant (LWD)
- LWD's Sister-In-Law, Lila (Mrs. C.V.) Dunavant Henkel
- LWD's Sister, Aubin Wert
- LWD's Daughter, Louise Dunavant (the future wife of Sutt Alexander I)



Louise Wert Dunavant: History of the Carolina Golf Club (Part 2 of 2)

Charlotte, NC



The Carolina Golf Club

- 2415 Old Steele Creek Road in Charlotte, NC -

Upper Photos:

From Mrs. H.J. Dunavant's stationery,
the club logo and a drawing of the original
Carolina Clubhouse

Lower Photo:

Today's Carolina Golf Club, after a recent
\$10,200,000 renovation

**Sutt Alexander I and Louise Wert Dunavant Alexander, Louise Wert Dunavant,
and the Carolina Golf Club of Charlotte, NC**

"Dunavant – Henkel: A Pretty Wedding in the Episcopal Church Wednesday"

It has been a long time since Morganton society witnessed as pretty a wedding as was solemnized in Grace Episcopal Church on Wednesday evening at 3:30 o'clock.

Miss Lila Dunavant, of Morganton, and Mr. Vance Henkel, of Lenoir, were the happy couple and were united according to the beautiful ritual of the Episcopal church by the rector, Rev. C. Satterlee.

While the handsome pipe organ gave forth the Nuptial March by Voss, rendered by Mrs. Helen Fay Summey, the accomplished organist, the wedding party entered the church in the following order: Miss Sadie Pressnell and Miss Addie Malone, of Morganton; Mr. Frank B. Davis, of Morganton, and Mr. J. Robert Craig, of Gastonia; Miss Anna Belle Monroe, of Lenoir, and Miss Gertrude Davis, of Morganton; Mr. B. Sidney Gaither, of Morganton, and Mr. J. Harper Beall, of Lenoir; Miss Alma Newland, of Lenoir, maid of honor.

Miss Dunavant came on the arm of her brother, Mr. H.J. Dunavant, while the groom entered from the side door, accompanied by Mr. Thomas L. Craig, of Gastonia, acting as best man, and joined them at the chancel. The bride was given away by her father, Capt. S.D. Dunavant. The ushers were Messrs. T.P. Moore and Z.T. Corpening.

The bride was dressed in a tailor-made suit of green broadcloth and carried in her hand a beautiful bouquet of bridal roses. Her only jewelry was a diamond pin.

Miss Newland wore green broadcloth, fur, and cream lace trimmings; Miss Monroe, green broadcloth, velvet and lace; Miss Davis, Yale-blue broadcloth, white moiré trimmings; Miss Presnell, black and white silk, with white satin trimmings; Miss Malone, brown broadcloth, white silk and jet trimmings.

During the ceremony, the organ softly rendered Wagner's wedding march, and on its conclusion the wedding party departed under the inspiring strains of Mendelssohn's march.

The church was neatly decorated with evergreen hangings and flowers. The presents were numerous, handsome and valuable.

The bride and groom, with the best man, Mr. Craig, left at 5 p.m. for Gastonia, where they were given a reception at the Falls House by Mr. T.L. Craig. From there they go to Norfolk and other northern cities. They will return to Lenoir in about ten days.

The wedding was conducted by Rev. Churchill Satterlee. (He was the son of Henry Y. Satterlee, the first Episcopal Bishop of Washington, DC, who established the National Cathedral.)

Left: Wedding Article in the "Morganton News", 1-13-1898.

Top Photo: From the Iredell County Heritage Book (Vol. 1. Pg. 316).

Courtesy of the Local History Room of the Iredell Co. Library



Mrs. Columbus Vance Henkel, 1881-1953. Taken ca. 1900.



**S. Lila Dunavant
Henkel**

**Daughter of
Samuel David Dunavant
and
Mary Virginia Corpening
Morganton, Burke Co., NC**



Above Photo: Lila Dunavant Henkel with one of her daughters.

S. Lila Dunavant Henkel

Born 1881 in Morganton, NC
Died 1953 in Charlotte, NC

Daughter of:
- Samuel David Dunavant and
- Mary Virginia Corpening
Sister of:
- Henry Jackson Dunavant
- Samuel DeWitt Dunavant
- Maurice Virginius Dunavant
Wife of: Columbus Vance Henkel I

Mother of:
- Columbus Vance Henkel II
(* Attended Woodberry Forest in VA)
- Lila Henkel (Spilman)
- Dorothy Henkel (Summerville)
(* Attended Stuart Hall, Staunton, VA)
- Virginia Henkel (DeBow)
* "Winston-Salem Journal" (1-10-1926)

A Daughter's Memories, Reflecting Her Mother's Character

A daughter of Lila Dunavant Henkel and C. V. Henkel, I, Dorothy Henkel Summerville (1907-1983), wrote an article about her family's life in Blowing Rock. That article, "Things I Remember", is provided in the supplement to this book. Provided here are a few of Dorothy's memories regarding her mother, Lila.

"One of the few times I ever saw my mother annoyed with my father was on one of those trips to Statesville. All of a sudden my father decided he wanted a watermelon. A storm was coming up and mother was anxious to get her brood home before dark. However, we stopped at several farms until a melon was found ..."

"The year I married the Great Depression hit... It affected us as it did most of our friends... Mother who was never downed by anything for long, did the only thing she was equipped to do. She had lived with old things always and had an eye for beauty as well as a bargain. She opened a small antique shop downtown. It went well, so she gave that up and rented the old house on Main Street where Mrs. Charles Beck lives. It had been a rectory and then a library. She had the little log house built in the yard for crafts and had the antiques in the house. I remember the first big sale that was made. Mrs. Jessie Wise of Wilmington bought a beautiful pink luster tea set. Mother closed the shop for the day and we celebrated."

"Mother and Lila (named after her mother) were always Episcopalians but father was a Presbyterian."

"My mother decorated the Club. She was in Palm Beach when one of the big estates there was being liquidated. This is where she bought the beautiful antique credenzas, the chandelier in the ballroom, the painting that used to hang in the ladies lounge and other antiques. A protégé of hers who studied at the Metropolitan Museum in New York made the lovely hooked rugs that were in the entrance hall and the ballroom."

"When the war came, mother found it inconvenient living at Dawn Hill because it was almost impossible to get gas... C.V. bought for her the stone house on Wallingford known as the Underdown House. She named it Creekside and installed the wrought iron gates leading to it, that she had bought in Cuba ..."

"Mother became ill and died. She loved mountains so much that she requested that two of her friends (there) would be pallbearers..."

"I for one would like to turn back the clock ..."



Above: Lowenstein-Henkel House in Statesville, NC (Artist Unknown)
This was the home where Columbus Vance Henkel I and Lila Dunavant Henkel reared their family.

Notes from Other Sources:

- At the death of her husband in 1926, Lila inherited an estate estimated at \$250,000 (about \$3,000,000 in today's currency). The estate included her husband's interest in the Blowing Rock Development Co. and the Henkel-Craig Livestock Co.
- The children of Lila and Columbus Vance Henkel I were NC State Senator Columbus Vance Henkel II of Turnersburg (married to Marguerite Nunan), Virginia S. Henkel (Mrs. Harold Alexander DeBow), Lila Henkel (Mrs. Robert Redd Spilman of Statesville) and Dorothy Henkel (Mrs. A.C. Summerville of Charlotte).
- Lila's DAR entry showed descentance from American Revolution Patriot Nathan Horton of NC (1757-1824), and his wife, Elizabeth Eagles (born 1766).

S. Lila Dunavant Henkel - A Cultured and Civic-Minded Lady

- Born 1881 in Morganton, Burke County, NC, Died 1953 at Charlotte's Memorial Hospital.
- Daughter of Samuel David Dunavant and Mary Virginia Corpening. Reared in Morganton.
- Sister of Henry Jackson Dunavant of Charlotte, Maurice Dunavant of Charlotte and Asheville, and DeWitt Dunavant of Hickory.
- Wife of Columbus Vance Henkel I of Statesville. (Married in Morganton in 1898.)
- Mother of State Senator Columbus Vance Henkel II, Lila Henkel (Spilman), Dorothy Henkel and Virginia Henkel.

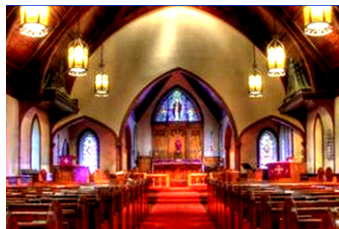
Adapted from an Obituary ("Hickory Daily Record", 10-3-1953):

- Final rites for Mrs. Columbus Vance Henkel, the former Miss Lila Dunavant of Morganton, a daughter of Captain Samuel D. Dunavant and Mrs. Virginia Corpening Dunavant, were held at Trinity Episcopal Church in Statesville. Burial was made in the Henkel family plot at Oakwood Cemetery in Statesville.
- Mrs. Henkel was prominently identified with the social and civic life of Statesville and Blowing Rock.
- She was born in Morganton in 1881 and spent her childhood there. She attended the local schools and the Kirkwood School for Girls in Lenoir.
- In 1898, shortly after finishing her education, she married Columbus Vance Henkel I, a Statesville businessman and an early developer of Blowing Rock.
- In Statesville, Mrs. Henkel was a leader in social life and was active in club and church work. She was a member of Trinity Episcopal Church in Statesville and St. Mary's of the Hills Episcopal Church in Blowing Rock. She was an organizer of the Associated Charities, an organization that preceded organized welfare work.
- She was the first chairman of the Iredell League of Women Voters.
- She was a member of Statesville's Eclectic Book Group, the United Daughters of the Confederacy, the Fort Dobbs Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, the Iredell Committee of Colonial Dames, and the Society for the Preservation of Historic Antiquities.
- She frequently traveled to Morganton and Charlotte to visit family and friends. She traveled around the United States and abroad.

S. Lila Dunavant Henkel

Statesville & Turnersburg in Iredell Co., NC -and- Blowing Rock, NC

Grace Episcopal Church in Morganton, NC
Ministers of this church conducted Lila's wedding and the funeral of her father, Capt. Dunavant. (Lila was a devout member.)



Grace Episcopal Church of Morganton and the Lowenstein-Henkel House were both designed and built by George Capes Bonniwell of NY in the 1890's.

Sites of Significance to the Henkel - Dunavant Family

Morganton, Burke Co., NC
and Statesville, Iredell Co., NC



C.V. and Lila Henkel, Oakwood Cem., Statesville

Lowenstein-Henkel House in Statesville, NC (Home of Columbus Vance Henkel I and Lila Dunavant Henkel)

This house was moved from West Broad Street to its current location at 229 Walnut Street in Statesville's Mitchell College Historic District. Built in 1893 for Dr. Julius Lowenstein, a distiller, it was later owned for many years by the Henkel family. In 2012, the house, now divided into six apartments, survived a fire. (This photo is from a collection maintained by NC State University.)



Morganton's Grace Episcopal Church is a contributing property of the South King Street Historic District.

Statesville's Lowenstein - Henkel House is a contributing property of the Mitchell College Historic District.



Mr. C. V. Henkel Sr. was born in Catawba County, near Conover, in 1867, and was named in honor of Governor Vance. Mr. Henkel married Miss Lila Dunavant of Morganton. Three daughters and one son came to their home, making a delightful family. Mr. Henkel was an outstanding business man of the State. The Highway to Blowing Rock, the Green Park Hotel of Blowing Rock, and the Vance Hotel of Statesville, are some of the resultants of his many activities. While he acquired considerable property, he was public spirited and generous to a fault. Before joining the Board of Trustees of the Appalachian State Normal School, he always manifested a passionate pride in the College's growth and development. Mrs. Henkel, his devoted wife, shared with him in all his altruistic activities. Mr. Henkel was a member of the Presbyterian Church, and had an abiding faith in the life to come. (Verbatim text and left photo from "The Rhododendron"; 1926 Edition; Special Collections of Appalachian State Univ.)

Added Notes: Zebulon Vance was a governor of NC during the Civil War.

"The Highway to Blowing Rock" was referring to the Lenoir-Blowing Rock Turnpike.

VANCE HOTEL: The Vance Hotel, completed in 1922, quickly became the place to go during the 1920's when Statesville was booming. It operated for nearly 90 years, was considered luxurious from the 1920's through the 1970's, and has been featured in several popular films, including "Leatherheads." It has 5 stories, 91 rooms, a spacious ball-room, a dining room, a street front restaurant, retail shop space, an indoor pool, and a parking deck adjacent to the Statesville Civic Center. C.V. Henkel and H.J. Dunavant were stockholders and both were on the Henkel Hotel Company's Board of Directors. This property in Statesville's historic downtown now has residential apartments.

Adapted from (1) a blog entry dated 9-19-2010, written by a Statesville resident, "Robert at Rooftop"; (2) a 2012 real estate website, Loopnet.com; (3) "The Statesville Landmark", 1-1-1926; and (4) "The Charlotte Observer", 1-18-1922. Both photos below are of the Vance Hotel.



HENKEL - CRAIG LIVESTOCK CO. (HCLC):

An ad in a local magazine, "The Catawba Soldier of the Civil War" showed C.V. Henkel and H.J. Dunavant as Vice Presidents. It stated, "Dealers in Horses and Mules, Buggies, Surreys, Hacks, Wagons, Saddles, Harnesses, and Farm Machinery." Incorporated in 1901, the company was headquartered in Statesville, with offices in Lenoir, Hickory and Newton.



Left: This HCLC building, built in 1895, still stands at 123 N. Center Street in Statesville, NC.

Right: This HCLC building, the Henkel Opera Bldg., was built in 1908 and still stands in Lenoir, NC. The top floor served as a performance space, and with chairs removed, a roller-skating rink. The first

floor had a large company showroom, and the basement had a stable.



S. Lila Dunavant's Spouse: Columbus "Vance" Henkel I

Born 1867 in Catawba, NC
Died 1926 in Statesville, NC

Son of:

- Cicero Henkel (Postmaster of Long Town in Catawba County, NC (1860-1866))

- Mary "Polly" Eleanora Little

Siblings: 11 Brothers and Sisters

Husband of: S. Lila Dunavant

Father of:

- Columbus Vance Henkel II

- Lila Henkel (Spilman)

- Dorothy Henkel

- Virginia Henkel

C.V. Henkel I was Presbyterian; his wife Lila Dunavant Henkel was Episcopalian. He was President of the Green Park Hotel Co. in Blowing Rock and of the Henkel Hotel Co. (or Vance Hotel Co.) in Statesville - where the Vance Hotel was named in his honor ("Winston-Salem Journal; 1-10-1926). C.V.'s parents, Cicero Henkel (1825-1878) and Eleanora Little, were buried at St. John's Lutheran Church in Lincoln (Catawba) Co. They were buried near the famous Lutheran Rev. David Henkel (1795-1831).

Entry in "The North Carolina Manual" (1955 Edition; Issued by Secretary of State, Thad Eure):

COLUMBUS VANCE HENKEL JR.

Twenty-fifth District — Counties: Catawba, Iredell and Lincoln. Two Senators. Democrat, Senator from the 25th Senatorial District, was born in Statesville, N.C., September 16, 1908. Son of Columbus Vance and Lila (Dunavant) Henkel. Attended Woodberry Forest School, Class of 1926; University of North Carolina, two years. Engaged in textiles and farming. State Senator in the General Assembly of 1953. Presbyterian. Married Miss Marguerite Nunan in 1944. Address Turnersburg N. C.

Columbus Vance Henkel II was a NC State Senator from 1953 to 1959. He also worked as a textile executive, a hotel operator and a realtor ("Statesville Record & Landmark"; 4-16-1971).

His sister, Lila Henkel (Spilman), married Robert Redd Spilman of Knoxville, TN, at Blowing Rock, NC. Mr. Spilman (born about 1901; died 1977 in Sanford, FL) became President of the Mills of Knoxville in TN, and also served as a U.S Army Colonel during World War I.

In 1932, C.V. Henkel II created a newspaper for Blowing Rock: "The Blowing Rocket." In 1940, he and Mr. Spilman bought Turnersburg, located 11 miles northeast of Statesville. Shortly afterwards, C.V. Henkel II bought out Spilman's interest and expanded the estate to over 1000 acres.

C.V. Henkel II bought the Wilfred Turner House in Turnersburg, which he and his mother, Lila, restored and expanded to 14 rooms. The house was painted pale yellow with white trim and dark green shutters. The yard was landscaped and enclosed with a white picket fence. Some of the boxwood in the yard were from the Knoxville, TN, home of his sister, Lila Henkel Spilman. The Turner-Henkel property included a boat house, cottage house, carriage house, and a stable for thoroughbred horses. (President Lyndon Johnson supposedly visited the home.)



**Dunavant
Descendant:**

**NC State Senator
Columbus Vance Henkel II**

Born 1908 in Statesville, NC
Died 1971 in Turnersburg, NC

Son of:

- Columbus Vance Henkel I and S. Lila Dunavant

Sibling of:

- Lila Henkel (Spilman), Dorothy Henkel, and Virginia Henkel

Husband of:

- Marguerite Nunan

Left Photo: Former home of Senator C.V. Henkel II as it appears today. The property has recently been used for weddings, doing business as "The 1812 Hitching Post".

Left Photo:

The home's photo and history were adapted from a website maintained by the "1812 Hitching Post".

Right Photo:

NC State Senator
C.V. Henkel II





Upper Left Photo (At the Lowenstein-Henkel House in Statesville, NC; 1912):

- Center: Lila Dunavant Henkel
- Far Right: Columbus Vance Henkel I
(The other gentleman may have been Lila's brother, Henry Jackson Dunavant.)
- Children: Lila Henkel (Spilman), Dorothy Henkel, Virginia Henkel, and Columbus Vance Henkel II

**Dunavant Descendants:
Henkel - Dunavant Family
Stateville and Blowing Rock, NC**



Upper Right Photo:

- Standing on Running Board: Henry Jackson Dunavant
- Standing Far Right: Columbus Vance Henkel I
(The identity of the other gentleman is unknown.)
- Lila Dunavant Henkel is standing beside her young niece, Louise Dunavant (Alexander)
(dtr of Henry Jackson and Louise Wert Dunavant).

Lower Right Photo (1912):

Columbus Vance Henkel II and the Dunavant twins - Louise Dunavant (Alexander) and Samuel Jackson Dunavant I



"Maurice" Virginus Dunavant (Born 1891 in Morganton, NC; Died 1960 in Asheville, NC)

Childhood in Morganton and Statesville, NC:

- Born in Burke Co., NC. Maurice's middle name was Virginus, a name often used to indicate descent from an old Virginian family. Maurice was the youngest surviving child of Samuel David Dunavant and Mary Virginia Corpening, at least ten years younger than his siblings, Lila, Jack and DeWitt.
- Mary Virginia Corpening Dunavant died shortly after giving birth to Maurice in 1891. (From Maurice's obituary in the "Statesville Record & Landmark"; 7-27-1960) Without a mother, Maurice was partially raised by his older sister, Lila Dunavant Henkel, in Statesville (Statesville Record & Landmark; 7-27-1960). His aunt, Sallie Corpening Gaither, helped care for him when he was in Morganton.
- On 9-13-1907, the "Morganton Landmark" stated that Maurice (misspelled "Morris") Dunavant was attending the Bingham School in Mebane, NC. The several schools in NC supervised by the Bingham family prepared students for admission to the University of NC.

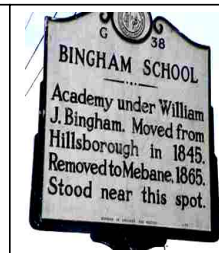
Adult Years in World War I, FL, and Western NC:

- In 1917 and 1918, Maurice served in World War I.
- In 1918, Maurice married Charlye Leigh Tomlin (1893-1918) in Statesville, NC. Sadly, she died of pneumonia that same year and was buried in Statesville's Oakwood Cem.
- In 1921, Maurice married Elizabeth Pritchett in Polk County, FL. Her parents, Mr. and Mrs. H.E. Pritchett, apparently had homes that year in both Statesville, NC, and Lakeland, FL.
- The 12-19-1921 edition of the "Statesville Landmark" described the Dunavant - Pritchett wedding in detail. Maurice is described as "a popular business man of Statesville" and Benjamin Cooper of Statesville served as his best man. Elizabeth Pritchett was described as "charming and popular".
- Maurice Dunavant maintained his social ties with NC. On 8-23-1926, the "Morganton Landmark" announced, "Mr. and Mrs. M.V. Dunavant, and Mrs. Miller, of Florida, who are spending the summer at Blowing Rock were here yesterday en route to Charlotte ..."
- The 1929 Charlotte Directory showed that "Maurice V and Elizabeth Dunavant" lived at the Addison Apartments in Charlotte and that Maurice was working as a salesman. (The Addison was a fashionable high-rise apartment building built during the 1920's.)
- The 1930 Census showed that Maurice and Elizabeth were still residing in Charlotte, NC.
- A Florida Supreme Court case appealed in 1939 ("H.E. Pritchett vs. Brevard Naval Stores County") showed that Maurice Dunavant, his wife Elizabeth, and his father-in-law H.E. Pritchett, were attempting to resolve a judgment in Polk County, FL. (The term "naval stores" usually referred to products made from pine trees.)

Retirement in Asheville, Divorce in Charlotte, and Burial in Morganton, NC:

- By 1941, Maurice and Elizabeth were still living in Charlotte, NC. About 1945, Maurice retired from the Chrysler Corporation and lived in Asheville during his last 15 years.
- In 1955, Maurice and Elizabeth divorced in Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC.
- In 1960, a will for "Maurice V. Dunavant" was probated in Buncombe Co., NC (Asheville).
- Maurice died in Asheville in 1960 (at age 69) and was buried with his parents and a brother, Samuel "DeWitt" Dunavant, in Morganton's Forest Hill Cemetery.
- Maurice's obituary, on the front page of the "Statesville Record & Landmark" (7-27-1960) is mistakenly titled, "Death Claims M. Z. Dunavant". It names only two survivors, both nieces in Charlotte: Mrs. A.C. Summerville and Mrs. Sutton Alexander. It lists them as "among other survivors" which it does not name.

The Bingham boys prep schools were at various locations in NC until 1928. This was considered the best academy in NC and one of the finest in the South. The schools focused on classical education and strict discipline.
(NC Museum of History)



Addison Apartments
Charlotte, NC

Maurice Virginus Dunavant
Western NC -and- Lakeland, FL

CHAPTER 5

VIRGINIAN FAMILY and ANCESTRY of Siblings SAM, WILLIAM, MOLLIE and SARAH DUNAVANT

**From Richmond Area, VA
(Charles City, Chesterfield County, and Henrico County)**

**To Southside VA
(Nottoway, Prince Edward, and Buckingham Counties)**

Likely Arriving In VA During or Before Year 1681

*Different spellings
of "Dunavant"
frequently
appeared in earlier
Virginian records
and publications.*

*These variations
were often
misspellings, but
families in different
branches may have
used the variations
themselves.*

*The different
spellings have been
preserved here in
case they are later
found to have
significance.*

My process of documenting the Virginian Dunavant ancestry began with the "Morganton Landmark" obituary of Sam Dunavant. The obituary mentioned that he was born in Farmville, VA. Farmville is in Prince Edward Co.

Virginian Births of Railroad Contractors Samuel David Dunavant and William Pemberton Dunavant Confirmed:

Farmville, VA, is located between Nottoway (formerly Amelia) County and Buckingham County. After further research, Sam's birthplace made sense: His grandfather, Pemberton Dunavant, owned large farms in both Nottoway and Buckingham Counties. Sam's birthplace raised another question: Had he migrated from VA to TN, like many other Dunavants, before settling in Morganton, NC? Further research showed that he had not. The implications were clear. If Sam moved directly from VA to NC, and he spent all of his adult years living in NC, and none of his ancestors or descendants ever settled in TN, then the Western NC Dunavants were a distinct branch of the Dunavant family.

Several other historical sources confirmed that Sam's brother, William Pemberton Dunavant, was also born in the same region of VA, in Buckingham Co.

Revelation of William Pemberton Dunavant's Middle Name:

The documentation of William's middle name, Pemberton, in a railroad directory was another important discovery. My research found that Pemberton Dunavant (apparently the wealthiest Dunavant in VA at the 1840 Census) resided in Buckingham Co., VA, but had also inherited his father's Nottoway Co. farm. The probate court decision of "Clarke and Others v. Dunnivant", decided by the VA Court of Appeals in 1839, revealed that Pemberton Dunavant inherited all of the Slaves and property from the Nottoway farm of his father, William Dunavant III (About 1760-1837). The 1840 Census confirmed that Pemberton Dunavant held 14 Slaves, so he would have been wealthy enough to have provided his grandsons with private education. (There were no public schools in VA at that time, and Sam and William would have needed a solid education to have become so successful in the business world. Railroad contracting required advanced math skills as well as the ability to mix socially with educated businessmen.)

Early Railroad Career in Southside Virginia Confirmed:

The obituary of William Pemberton Dunavant stated, "He was born in Buckingham County, Va ... He received an academic education, and at the age of 19 years became superintendent of contract work on the Orange and Alexandria Railroad." ("Memphis Avalanche"; 6-1-1891)

Other Connections with Buckingham, VA, Discovered:

The death certificate of Sam's son, Henry Jackson Dunavant, stated that Sam was born in Buckingham, VA. Several obituaries stated that Sam was born in Farmville, VA, which was located less than 25 miles from Buckingham.

A social announcement in "The Richmond Dispatch" (8-2-1896) stated that "W.H. Dunavant" of Enonville (Buckingham Co.), and his granddaughter Lottie Godsey of Richmond, would visit "Capt S.D. Dunavant" in Morganton, NC. The visit of W.H. Dunavant and Lottie Godsey, over such a distance, as well as the announcement itself, suggested a close relationship.

About 1883, in Morganton, NC, Sam won the contract to supply bricks locally for the building of the Western NC Insane Asylum (now Broughton Hospital). According to "Southern Medicine and Surgery" (Vol. 100, 1938), slate for construction was shipped from Sam and William's childhood region of Buckingham, VA, where their father, William Henry Dunavant, still owned land.

In the 1850 Census, the Dunavant siblings were found living together in Buckingham Co. with the Shoemaker family: "William Dunnivant" (age 11), "Samuel Dunnivant" (age 9), "Sarah Dunnivant" (age 7) and "Mary Dunnivant" (age 5). We can now identify those siblings:

- William Pemberton Dunavant (Born 1837 in VA; Died 1891 in TN)
- Samuel David Dunavant (Born 1839 in VA; Died 1906 in NC)
- Sarah (possibly known as "Sallie") Ann Dunavant Hopkins (Born 1841 VA; Died 1908 VA)
- Mary (known as "Mollie") Dunavant Godsey (Born 1844 in VA; Died 1915 in VA)

The ages shown on the Census were approximate, but the birth order was correct. The 1850 Census found their father, "Wm. H. Dunnivant", living in a different household in Buckingham Co. If his wife had died, he may have thought that such young children needed a woman's care. His neighbor, Mrs. Shoemaker, had children of similar ages so she may have been chosen as a capable caregiver.

Brothers Sam and William Dunavant: Connections to Southside Virginia

From Social Announcements in Newspapers

Richmond, VA: "The Richmond Dispatch" of 12-27-1891 (Presented in "Chronicling America" of the Library of Congress):

"Mr. William H. Dunavant, of Buckingham County, is spending the holidays with his daughters, Mrs. R.H. Godsey and Mrs. William Hopkins, 1414 West Clay Street."

Morganton, NC: "The Morganton Herald" of 8-23-1894:

"Mr. Dunavant, of Buckingham County, VA, father of Mr. S.D. Dunavant, is in town."

Richmond, VA: "The Richmond Dispatch" of 8-2-1896:

"W.H. Dunavant of Enonville, and his granddaughter Lottie Godsey of Richmond, will visit Capt. S.D. Dunavant in Morganton."

Morganton, NC: "The Morganton Herald" of 8-13-1896:

"Mr. W.H. Dunavant, of Rockingham, Va., is on a visit to his son, our highly esteemed townsman, Capt. S.D. Dunavant."

(Added Note: The reporter apparently confused Rockingham with Buckingham. We have no other indications that W.H. Dunavant ever lived in Rockingham, VA, and we have several sources indicating that he resided in Buckingham Co. his entire life.)

From a Published Genealogy

From "Hopkins of Virginia and Related Families: Chapter III: Descendants of James M. Hopkins, of James City County, VA" (Walter Lee Hopkins; 1931). The entry shown is verbatim, with italics and bold type added for emphasis:

"William W. Hopkins, b. 1828, d. Sept. 21, 1893, m. (1st) Laura Hall (a descendant of Isaiah Hall, an early settler of Chesterfield Co.) prior to 1853, and left one child, Alice Maria; *m. (2nd) Sarah Ann Dunnivant, dau. of Wm. H. and Elizabeth (Warriner) Dunnivant, of Buckingham Co., Va., prior to 1865.* They had one child only, Ada Belle, who was b. in 1865 and d. Jan. 28, 1878. She, her father and mother were bu. in Oakwood Cemetery, Richmond, Va. He left a will dated Sept. 12, 1893; pro. Oct. 10, 1893, in Richmond Ch'y Court (W.B. 5, p. 384), in which he devised all of his property to his wife, Sarah Ann Hopkins. His wife Sarah Ann Hopkins was b. in Buckingham Co., in 1842, d. May 27, 1908, bu. in Oakwood Cemetery, Richmond, Va.; left will dated Sept. 20, 1907; pro. June 18, 1908 (W.B. 10, p. 332, Richmond Ch'y Court), in which she devised property to her sister, Mary Elizabeth Godsey, and to the three grandchildren of her husband, W.W. Hopkins. "

(The entry continues to provide information regarding Wm. W. Hopkins' descendants through his first wife - associated with Petersburg, VA.)

Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant, Probable Earlier Wife

For researchers of the Dunavants, the above genealogical entry is of special interest. It is, so far, the only known document which names an earlier wife of William Henry Dunavant, and the mother of his children. Unfortunately, the birth and death dates provided by the researcher for both Capt. James M. Hopkins and his son, William W. Hopkins, were questionable, suggesting that the researcher's other information should be verified. Until we find other sources identifying Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant, we should think of her as the probable earlier wife of William Henry Dunavant and the probable mother of siblings William, Samuel, Sarah and Mary ("Mollie") Dunavant.

Father of William, Samuel, Sarah and Mollie Dunavant: William "Henry" Dunavant

Born 1814/1815 in Prince Edward Co., VA;

Died 1901 in Enonville, Buckingham Co., VA

Obituary from "The Farmville Herald" of
Farmville, VA, 10-4-1901:

William H. Dunnivant, a life-long resident of Buckingham, died on Sunday and was buried on Monday at Enonville, where he had lived throughout a long life of 86 and a half years.

Your older residents and readers well remember him. In the days when Peters and Wright, and Booker & Hunt, and Col. Ligon, and Clem Read were tobacco buyers in Farmville, Henry Dunnivant's tobacco - the "Buckingham black fat type," always brought the top notch in price, it was always well handled and of superb quality. He was a thoroughly good farmer, but his greatest success was as a grower of tobacco and sweet potatoes. I have known him to have hundreds of bushels for sale for seed in the spring. The first day of April was his date for opening the kilns. He was a kind neighbor, and honorable man, and a devout Christian. His name has been on the roll of members of Enon Baptist church for seventy years.

His son, Capt. Sam Dunnivant, railroad contractor, and his two daughters, Mrs. Godsey and Mrs. Hopkins, have been with him since 10 days prior to his death.

Rev. Mr. Boatwright, his life-long friend and pastor, officiated at the burial. About 200 people were present. The coffin, a massive one, was shipped from Richmond.

Obituary from the "Richmond Dispatch" of Richmond, VA,
10-3-1901; From a Univ. of Virginia Website:

Death of W.H. Dunevant - Buckingham Courthouse. Oct 2. (Special.) A large concourse of people turned out to attend the burial of Mr. W. H. Dunevant at Enonville Sunday. Mr. Dunevant was a prominent citizen, and was 87 years old. His daughters, Mrs. Godsey, Mrs. Hopkins of Richmond and Capt. Sam Dunevant of Tennessee, were here to do all they could for his comfort, and he had a trained nurse to attend him.

Added Note: This obituary mistakenly associated Capt. Samuel David Dunavant with TN, even though he resided only in VA as a child, and only in NC as an adult. W.H. Dunavant's other son, William Pemberton Dunavant, did reside in Memphis, TN, but that son died before his father. Both sons had long careers as railroad contractors.



**Father of William, Samuel, Sarah and Mollie Dunavant:
William "Henry" Dunavant**

Born 1814/1815 in Prince Edward Co., VA; Died 1901 in Enonville, Buckingham Co., VA

- 1840: U.S. Census: W.H.D. lived in Buckingham's Southern District.
 1860: U.S. Census (Pg. 845): W.H.D. lived in Buckingham District 1 with daughters Sarah A. Dunavant and Mary E. Dunavant.
 1866: After being widowed, W.H. Dunavant married America Mason of Buckingham Co.
 1870: U.S. Census (Pg.232b): W.H.D. & America lived in Curdsville.
 1880: U.S. Census (Pg. 413c): W.H.D., America, and their family were in Curdsville. (Household included infant son, DeWitt - a name also given to Samuel David Dunavant's son in Morganton, NC.)
 1896: W.H. Dunavant lived in Enonville where Pemberton Dunavant, his father, had donated land for the building of Enon Baptist Church. Buckingham Co. had 24 known gold mines, and W.H. Dunavant owned land near one of them. "The Buckingham Land Tax Summaries and Implied Deeds, 1841-1870" stated that the land of "William H. Dunnivant" was at the "Crossroads near the Booker Mine" (now known as the Morrow Mine - several miles south of Dillwyn).
 1896: "Miss Lottie Godsey of 1904 West Main Street, accompanied by her grandfather, Mr. W.H. Dunavant, of Enonville, will leave Wednesday for Morganton, NC, where they will be the guests of Captain S. D. Dunavant." ("Richmond Dispatch", 8-2-1896; "Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers")
 1900: U.S. Census (Pg 4b): "William H. Dunevant"(age 85) lived in Curdsville with his wife, America. (They had been married for 33 years). Household included a nephew, cook and servant.

**Father of
 William, Samuel, Sarah and Mollie
 Dunavant:
 William "Henry" Dunavant
 Born 1814/1815 in Prince Edward Co., VA;
 Died 1901 in Enonville, Buckingham Co., VA**

1840 U.S. Federal Census Entry (Verbatim, In Full):

Name: Wm. H. Dunavant (Mistakenly recorded as "Wm. H. Duncrant")
 Home in 1840: Southern District, Buckingham, VA
 Free White Persons - Males - Under Age 5: 2
 (Added Note: This would have been his sons, William and Samuel.)
 Free White Persons - Males - 20 thru 29: 1
 Free White Persons - Females - 20 thru 29: 1
 Slaves - Males - Under 10: 1
 Slaves - Males - Under 36 thru 54: 1
 Slaves - Females - 10 thru 23: 1
 Slaves - Females - 24 thru 35: 1
 Persons Employed in Agriculture: 2
 Free White Persons Under 20: 2
 Free White Persons 20 thru 49 : 2
 Total Free White Persons: 4
 Total Slaves: 4
 Total All Persons - Free White, Free Colored, Slaves: 8



This 1895 map of Southside VA shows towns of significance to the Dunavants. Shown in the lower right corner was Nottoway Co. where Revolutionary Patriot William Dunavant III (1760-1836) had his farm. His son, Pemberton Dunavant, inherited the Nottoway farm but moved to Buckingham Co., where he would establish his own farm and donate land for a church at Mt. Tabor (later known as Enon Baptist Church).

William Henry Dunavant (1814/1815-1901), son of Pemberton Dunavant, was born in Prince Edward Co., and his son, Samuel David Dunavant, was born in Farmville of that same county.

William Henry Dunavant remained a lifelong member of the Enon Baptist Church. Two sources referred to him as "Henry". One was his obituary in "The Farmville Herald" (10-4-1901). Also, the "Richmond Dispatch" (10-31-1901) announced: "Mr. C.D. McCraw, administrator of the estate of the late Henry Dunavant, will have a sale of the personal property on the 2d of November at the homeplace at Enonville."

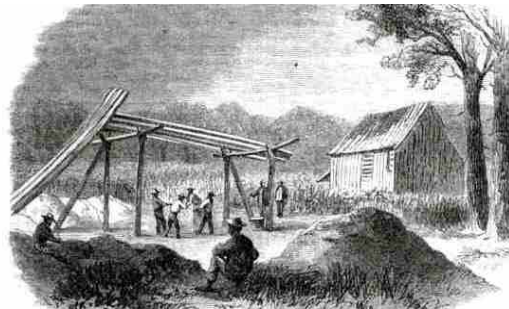
The U.S. Census of 1850 gave us our first record of the Dunavant siblings. It found "William Dunnivant" (age 11), "Samuel Dunnivant" (age 9), "Sarah Dunnivant" (age 7) and "Mary Dunnivant" (age 5) living with the family of a Buckingham County miner, "Jordan W. Shoemaker" (age 36). The household also included his wife, "Elizabeth Shoemaker" (age 29) and four of the Shoemakers' young children.

We know that the property of William Henry Dunavant was near the Booker Gold Mine (now known as the Morrow Mine), and that many Shoemakers were buried in the nearby Gold Mine Cemetery. (As one of Buckingham County's earlier families, the Shoemakers were well established in the area.) So it appears that, for awhile, W.H. Dunavant left his children in the care of his neighbors. As a farmer working in the fields, he could not have supervised such young children, and their mother (probably Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant) may have already died.

We can be sure of this: the children's placement with a miner's family afforded young William and Samuel with a unique opportunity to learn about digging in rock formations. The country's first gold rush was in Central Virginia from about 1825 to 1848. Buckingham County was at its center, with 24 known gold mines, and W.H. Dunavant owned land near one of those mines. "The Buckingham Land Tax Summaries and Implied Deeds, 1841-1870" stated that the land of "William H. Dunnivant" was at the "Crossroads near the Booker Mine". The Booker Mine was south of Dillwyn. Opened in 1806, it was one of Virginia's first gold mines, and was one of the first in the nation to employ underground mining techniques.

If gold mining was the most exciting thing going on in Buckingham County in 1850, it is doubtful that anyone could have kept two brothers, aged 9 and 11, from seeing those mines. Living awhile with a miner, they would have witnessed various digging techniques and, if their later careers were any indication, they paid very close attention. As adults, the Dunavant brothers often dug and blasted tunnels through mountains - apparently without any formal engineering education. (And this expertise was passed down. A biographical article regarding Sam's son, Henry Jackson Dunavant, stated, "It was heavy rock work which always gave pleasure to Mr. Dunavant.") Early exposure to underground mining techniques did more than provide a little gold to Sam and William Dunavant. It gave them valuable insights that could later be used to build railroad lines through rocky terrain.

John Wilkerson Shoemaker Sr.(born 1813 in Buckingham Co.) died of asthma (possibly "miner's lung") in 1870. His wife, Elizabeth H. "Bettie or Bessie" Miles Shoemaker (born 1819 in Buckingham Co.) died of dropsy in 1867.



The image above, from "Harper's New Monthly Magazine", had this caption: "Shaft Mining in central Virginia. c. 1865". In 1-14-2013, Joanne Yeck of the web blog, "Slate River Ramblings", noted:

In December of 1865, just after the Civil War had ended, a journalist for *Harper's New Monthly Magazine* visited some of Buckingham's still active mining enterprises ... The writer traveled from Fluvanna County, across the James River and the Canal, journeying to "the renowned County of Buckingham," stating, "I apply that epithet to it, because it has always borne the character of being the richest mineral county in the State of Virginia." Ms. Yeck adds, "Prior to 1848, the gold vein that runs through Buckingham County and environs was one of the richest in the nation. In 1832, the first commercial gold mine in Buckingham was established at Bernard Gaines Booker's plantation, located about three miles from Sprouse's Corner."

Caregivers of William Henry Dunavant's Young Children: The Shoemaker Family Buckingham Co., VA

From 1760 to the early 1900's, the Dunavant family migrated from the greater Richmond area to Southside Virginia, the region southwest of Richmond.

In 1791, Pemberton Dunavant was born in Nottoway County, VA.

Pemberton served in the War of 1812. Service Records show the following entry: "Name: Pemberton Dunnevant Company: 7th Regiment (Saunders) of the Virginia Militia. Rank at Induction: Private. Rank at Discharge: Private." (Roll Box: 62, Roll Exct: 602.)

By 1832, Pemberton had established his own farm in Buckingham County, near Enonville. That year, he donated land for the construction of the first Enon Baptist Church near Enonville in Buckingham County.

In 1836, Pemberton's father, William Dunavant (1760-1836) died and Pemberton inherited his father's large Nottoway County farm. Owning two large farms, one in Nottoway County and one in Buckingham County, Pemberton became a wealthy man. He continued to reside in Buckingham County; it is not yet known whether he retained his father's Nottoway farm.

Shown Right: Enon Baptist Church in Enonville, Buckingham Co.

"This church was first established at Mt. Tabor in 1832. At first, it was a log building. In 1838, a new building was built and the name was changed to Enon ... Land for the original church is believed to have been donated by Pemberton Dunnevant."

(From "The Courthouse Burned: Book I" by M.A. Thetford)

Added Note: An obituary stated that Pemberton's son, William Henry Dunavant, remained a lifelong member of Enon Baptist Church until his death in 1901.

Assessing the Dunavants' Wealth During the Mid-1800's

Before the Civil War, wealth in Southside VA was often related to a family's capacity to produce tobacco (total acreage, plus the manpower necessary to farm that acreage and process the tobacco). "The Buckingham Land Tax Summaries and Implied Deeds - 1841-1870" stated that, between 1841 and 1844, Pemberton sold 490 acres to his sons, "William H., John P. and Samuel Dunnivant". The "Buckingham Land Tax Summaries" also stated that, between 1846 and 1870, "John P. Dunnivant and Samuel" owned 403 acres and sold 90 acres to "William H. Dunnivant". The Summaries show that, between 1846 and 1870, "William H. Dunnivant" bought 86 acres from his father Pemberton and another 90 acres from his brother, "John P. Dunnivant".

But despite the family's sizable land holdings, their manpower to farm that land appears to have been modest. In 1840, the year after Sam Dunavant was born, Pemberton Dunavant held 14 Slaves and his son, William Henry Dunavant held 4 Slaves. Considering that VA had more than a hundred plantations in the "100 - 500 Slaves" category, the Virginian Dunavants' workforce was relatively modest.

Slaveholding was the horrible norm for many wealthy Southern families before the Civil War. Like many Southern families, the Dunavant family acquired slaves to increase its wealth.



Grandfather of William, Samuel, Sarah and Mollie Dunavant: Pemberton Dunavant (Born 1791; Died After 1870)

Nottoway and Buckingham Counties, VA

1820 Census:

Name: "Pembin Dunavant"

Home in 1820 (City, County, State): New Canton, Buckingham County, VA

Enumeration Date: August 7, 1820

Free White Persons - Males - Under 10: 2

Free White Persons - Males - 16 thru 25: 1

Free White Persons - Females - Under 10: 3

Free White Persons - Females - 26 thru 44: 1

Slaves - Females - Under 14: 2

Number of Persons - Engaged in Agriculture: 1

Free White Persons - Under 16: 5

Free White Persons - Over 25: 1

Total Free White Persons: 7

Total Slaves: 2

Total All Persons - White, Slaves, Colored, Other: 9

At her website, "Obion Co. TN Branches and Twigs", Researcher Gay Mathis provided much of the census information appearing here. Her page stated, "Use as a guide only and not as complete fact." The spelling variations of "Dunavant" on the various census reports were retained by Mrs. Mathis.

1850 Census: Buckingham County, VA - Dist 2 (Pg 403b):

Pemberton Dunnivant 62 Nottoway Co., VA

Mary Dunnivant 67 Charlotte Co., VA

Melvine Dunnivant 28 Halifax Co., VA

John Dunnivant 26 Halifax Co., VA

Sarah Dunnivant 24 Buckingham Co., VA

Jane Dunnivant 22 Buckingham Co., VA

**1860 Census: Buckingham County, VA - Dist 2
(Pgs 987a and 987 b (85 & 86):**

Pemberton Dunivant 76 VA

Mary Dunivant 78 VA

Malvina Dunivant 28 VA

Jane Dunivant 22 VA

Saml A Dunivant 36 VA

Anna Dunivant 11 VA

John Dunivant 9 VA

Douglass Dunivant 7 VA

Martha Dunivant 6 VA

Molly Dunivant 4 VA

Thomas Dunivant 2 VA

1870 Buckingham Co., VA Census - Curdsville (Pg. 241):

Pemberton Dunavant 79 VA

Mary Dunavant 87 VA

1840 U.S. Census:

Name: Pemberton Dunavant ("Born 1791")

Home in 1840: Southern District, Buckingham County, VA

Free White Persons - Males - 15 thru 19: 1

Free White Persons - Males - 20 thru 29: 1

Free White Persons - Males - 40 thru 49: 1

Free White Persons - Females - 10 thru 14: 2

Free White Persons - Females - 15 thru 19: 3

Free White Persons - Females - 40 thru 49: 1

Slaves - Males - Under 10: 1

Slaves - Males - 10 thru 23: 4

Slaves - Males - 24 thru 35: 2

Slaves - Females - Under 10: 3

Slaves - Females - 10 thru 23: 2

Slaves - Females - 24 thru 35: 1

Slaves - Females - 36 thru 54: 1

Persons Employed in Agriculture: 4

Persons Employed in Manufacture and Trade: 4

Free White Persons - Under 20: 6

Free White Persons 20 thru 49: 3

Total Free White Persons: 9

Total Slaves: 14

Total All Persons - Free White, Free Colored, Slaves: 23

**Grandfather of
William, Samuel, Sarah and Mollie Dunavant:
Pemberton Dunavant (Born 1791; Died After 1870)**
Nottoway and Buckingham Counties, VA

American Revolution Service (Approved Pension Application)

Below from: VA REVOLUTIONARY PENSION APPLICATIONS
Volume 32; Abstracted/Compiled by
John Frederick Dorman; Washington, D.C. 1979

DUNNAVANT, WILLIAM. (Entry S.8365)

7 Feb. 1833, Nottoway Co., Va. William (X) Dunnivant of said county, aged 72, declares he was drafted in 1777 with Capt. Paulin Anderson and served seven weeks under Anderson at Williamsburg and Hampton. He afterwards served seven weeks under Capt. Dennis at Petersburg and also two tours of three months under Capt. W. Finney at Richmond, Petersburg, Meadow Bridges and Wilton on James River and in one of these tours was pursued by the British up James River to Point of Fork and Albemarle Mtn.

He also served another tour of nine weeks under Capt. Morecock and Maj. Decloman at Malvern Hills and Wilton. He was drafted at Amelia Court House under orders from Col. Greene who commanded the Amelia regiment to serve two years and with others was ordered to join the main army then in winter quarters at Chesterfield Court House, Va., and served on this tour five months under Capt. Lovelace, a regular officer, and then furnished a substitute, ---- Robertson, and paid Robertson 4000 pounds Continental money to finish out his tour and was discharged by Col. Davis near Chesterfield Court House, Va. He was at the surrender of Cornwallis at Yorktown and served this tour under Capt. Morecock for seven weeks.

He was born 17 May 1760 in Amelia County. He has the register of his age made by his father. He has always resided in Amelia and Nottoway counties.

Note: The pension application above was approved: William Dunnivant of Nottoway Co., Va., a private in the company of Capt. Anderson in the Virginia line for twelve months, was placed on the Virginia pension roll at \$40 per annum under the Act of 1832. Certificate 6259 was issued on Feb. 27, 1833.

The above documentation was provided by researcher Gay Mathis on her Rootsweb webpage ("Obion Co. TN Branches and Twigs").

Great-Grandparents of William, Samuel, Sarah and Mollie Dunavant: William Dunavant III (American Revolution Patriot; 1760-1836) and Susannah Pemberton Smith (Married in Amelia Co, VA, in 1780)

Amelia and Nottoway Counties, VA

William Dunavant's Will (Pemberton Dunavant's Inheritance)

Below from: VA Reports: Jefferson - 33 Grattan, 1730-1880. Thomas Johnson Michie, Thomas Jefferson, Peachy Ridgway Grattan. Michie Co. Law Publishers, Charlottesville, VA, 1902. Court Case: Clarke & Others vs. Dunnivant.

In the county court of Nottoway, at April term 1837, a writing purporting to be the last will and testament of William Dunnivant then lately deceased, was produced by Pemberton Dunnivant one of the executors therein named, and offered for probate. It stated: "In the name of God, amen. I, William Dunnivant of Nottoway and state of Virginia, being in perfect health of body and of perfect mind and memory (thanks be given to God) calling unto mind the mortality of my body, and knowing that it is appointed for all men once to die, do make and ordain this my last will and testament. First, my just debts to be paid; and then I lend unto my beloved wife Sarah the following property during her life, that is, the whole of my estate to be kept together until the death of my wife; then, at her death, I will John M. Butcher one dollar, Pleasant Clarke one dollar, John W. Dunnivant one dollar, Mary Crowder one dollar, William G. Butcher one dollar, Elizabeth Butcher one dollar, John Butcher junior one dollar, Susanna Butcher one dollar, Sarah Butcher one dollar, Edgar Dunnivant one hundred dollars and be educated, and Pemberton Dunnivant to receive the balance of my estate, to wit. my tract of land, Beck, Daniel, Eliza, Joe, Billy, Nancy, Moses, James, and all their increase, and stock of all kinds, household and kitchen furniture, plantation utensils. I appoint Shadrack R. Sudbury and Pemberton Dunnivant executors to my estate. --- In witness whereof I have hereunto put my hand and seal this fifteenth day of December one thousand eight hundred and twenty eight.

William X Dunnivant, [Seal.] mark. Signed, sealed and delivered in the presence of
P. O. Lipscomb, Allen Robertson, John Roberts."

William's Earlier Wife (Siblings' Grandmother): William Dunnivant and Susannah Pemberton Smith were married in Amelia County in 1780. William and Susannah witnessed the will of Henry Smith in 1780 (Prince Edward County, VA., Will Book 3, p.293/FHL Film 0033217). This will was proved in 1803, at which time William indicated that Susannah was deceased.
William's Later Wife: In 1826, William Dunnivant and his wife Sally were parties to two land transfers in Nottoway County (Nottoway County, VA., Deed Book 7, p.240/FHL Film 0032920 and Nottoway County Order Book 9, p.403/FHL Film 0032925).



Virginian Dunavant Migration

From the Greater Richmond Area:

The ancestry of Pemberton Dunavant has been researched by others. Cornelius Dunavant and William Dunavant I lived in Charles City, Henrico County and Chesterfield County - all part of today's greater Richmond area. If their research is correct, this Dunavant line was in Virginia during the colony's first 75 years.

To Amelia (Later Nottoway) County:

William Dunavant II was born in Henrico County but he moved west and established a farm in Amelia (later Nottoway) County. In 1737, a titheables record for Amelia County stated that "Thos Dunavant" had 74 acres of land in Amelia County between Flat Creek and Deep Creek, near the point where Flat Creek flows into the Appomattox River. The record also showed "Humfris Dunavant" and "Wm Dunavant" as owning one acre each. Ten years later, in 1747, "William Dunavent" of Henrico County gave 74 acres in Amelia County to his daughter Mary's husband, Henry Crittenden. This refers to William Dunavant I (Born Abt 1685; Died Bef 1758). In 1788, the Nottoway Parish was separated from Amelia County and became its own county; therefore, the Dunavants' earlier Amelia County farm and the later Nottoway County farm *may* have been one and the same.

To Buckingham County:

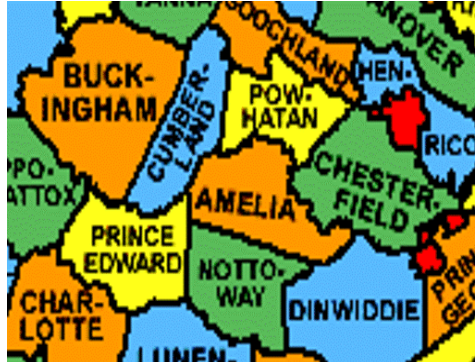
Rev. War Patriot William Dunavant III remained in Nottoway County but his son, Pemberton Dunavant, moved on to Buckingham County. Pemberton appears to have been the first Dunavant in Buckingham County. Pemberton had been born in Nottoway (formerly Amelia) County but had established a farm in Buckingham County before his father's Nottoway County estate was probated in 1837. Unfortunately, a fire destroyed the Buckingham County courthouse in 1869 and most early records were lost.

Early Dunavant Migration Within VA

(Preliminary Research)



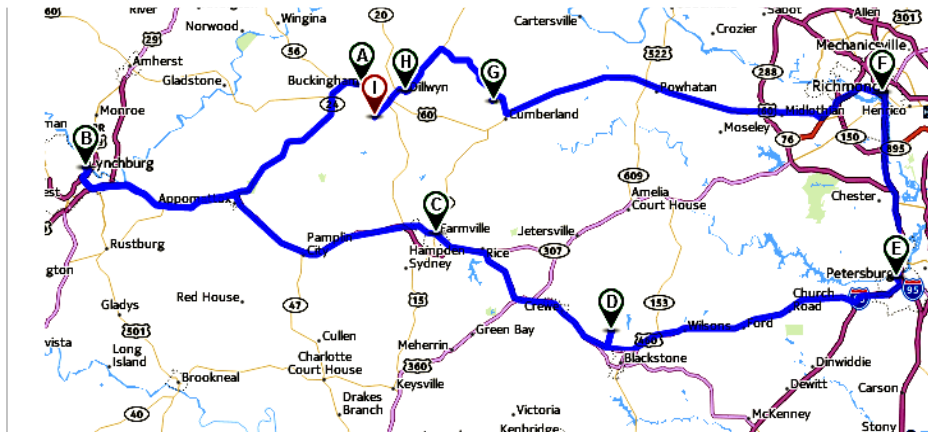
"Surrender of Cornwallis:
At York-Town,
Va. Oct. 1781"
(Print Repository:
Library of
Congress).
According to an
approved pension
application,
Patriot "William
Dunnivant" of
Nottoway County
(1760-1836) was
present at this last
major land battle
of the Rev. War.



Migration of the
Family of Patriot
William Dunavant III:

From Greater
Richmond
(Henrico Co.,
Chesterfield Co.,
and Amelia Co.)
To
Nottoway Co.
Then on to
Buckingham Co.

Notes: (1) The Dunavant siblings - William, Samuel, Mary/Mollie and Sarah/Sallie - were the children of William Henry Dunavant and the grandchildren of Pemberton Dunavant. Pemberton had large farms in both Buckingham and Nottoway (formerly Amelia) Counties. (2) This map below is a modern map. The counties mentioned in historical records had different boundaries and so historical maps should be referenced as needed. Statements should be reviewed for accuracy as new research sources become available. (3) Some of the information here reflects the research of Gay Mathis, as it appeared on her Rootsweb webpage ("Obion Co. TN Branches and Twigs").



Note: Pemberton Dunavant was a son of Revolutionary War Patriot, William Dunavant. He was the father of William Henry Dunavant.

Note: War of 1812 Service Record:
Name: "Pemberton Dunnevant"
Company: 7 REG'T (SAUNDER'S) VIRGINIA MILITIA.
Rank at Induction & Discharge: Private
(Source: Roll Box: 62 Roll Ext: 602)

H/I - Enonville/ Dillwyn (Buckingham Co. near Morrow Mine)

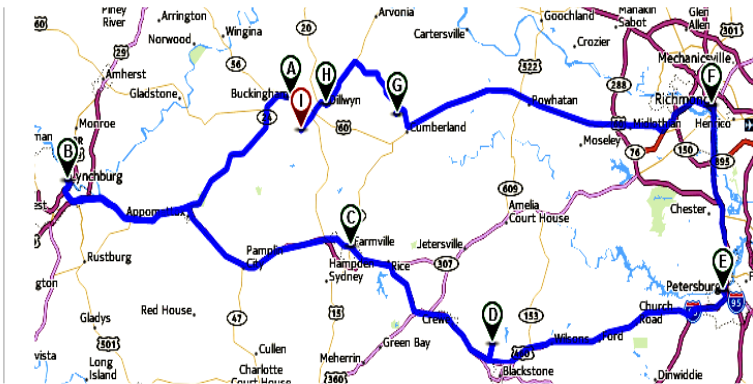
- 1814: William Henry Dunavant, son of Pemberton Dunavant, was born.
- 1832: Pemberton Dunavant, about age 41, donated land for construction of the Enon Baptist Church.
- 1837: A son was born to William Henry Dunavant, and he was named William Pemberton Dunavant.

D -Nottoway (Formerly Amelia) Co. VA

- 1760: American Revolution Patriot "William Dunnivant" (1760-1836) was born in Amelia Co.
- 1777: 1833 pension application stated that "William Dunnivant" was drafted for his Amer. Rev. service this year.
- 1780: Amer. Rev. Patriot "William Dunnivant" (1760-1836) married Susannah Pemberton Smith in Amelia Co. (She died before 1803.)
- 1788: Nottoway Co. created from Amelia.
- 1826: "William Dunnivant" (1760-1836) and second wife, Sally, were parties to 2 land transfers in Nottoway Co.
- 1833: An approved Amer. Rev. pension application stated that "William Dunnivant" had been a private who served under Capt. Anderson in VA, and that he had always lived in Amelia and Nottoway Counties.
- 1836: Rev. Patriot Wm. Dunavant III (1760-1836) died in Nottoway Co. His large farm was willed to wife Sarah, and upon her death, mostly to his son, Pemberton, who had settled in Buckingham Co. (Several of Pemberton's relatives unsuccessfully contested the will in the case, "Clarke and Others vs. Dunnivant".)

**Dunavant Events in VA:
1760 to 1837
(Preliminary Research)**

Notes: (1) The Dunavant siblings - William, Samuel, Mary/Mollie and Sarah/Sallie - were the children of William Henry Dunavant and the grandchildren of Pemberton Dunavant. Pemberton had large farms in both Buckingham and Nottoway (formerly Amelia) Counties. (2) This map below is a modern map. The counties mentioned in historical records had different boundaries and so historical maps should be referenced as needed. Statements should be reviewed for accuracy as new research sources become available. (3) Some of the information here reflects the research of Gay Mathis, as it appeared on her Rootsweb webpage ("Obion Co.TN Branches and Twigs").



A - Buckingham County

- 1830: VA Census Report showed Pemberton Dunavant living in Buckingham County.
- 1840: US Census: "Pemberton Dunavant" and "Wm H Dunavant" in Southern District of Buckingham.
- 1841: Sarah Ann Dunavant (later, Hopkins) was born in Buckingham Co. to William Henry Dunavant (a son of Pemberton Dunavant) and Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant.
- 1844: Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant (later, Godsey) was born in Buckingham Co. to William Henry Dunavant and, probably, Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant.
- 1844-1850: Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant (wife of W.H. Dunavant) may have died during this period.
- 1850: U.S. Census Report showed the "Pemberton Dunnivant" family residing in Buckingham Co. District 2. U.S. Census Report showed these children living in the household of Jordan W. Shoemaker and Elizabeth Shoemaker: "William Dunnevant" (age 11), "Samuel Dunnevant" (age 9), "Sarah Dunnevant" (age 7), and "Mary Dunnevant" (age 5).

C - Farmville (Prince Edward Co.)

1839: Samuel David Dunavant was born in Farmville, VA, between Pemberton Dunavant's farms in Buckingham and Nottoway Counties.

H/I- Enonville/ Dillwyn (Buckingham Co. near Morrow Mine)

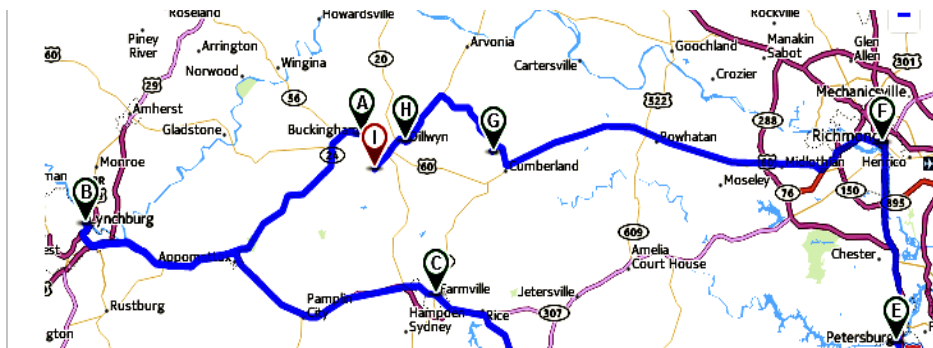
A Land Tax Summary (1841-1870) stated that the land of "W.H. Dunavant" was close to the crossroads near the Booker Mine (now known as the Morrow Mine). Many members of the Shoemaker family, an early family of Buckingham County, were buried in the nearby Gold Mine Cemetery.

Below: Undated Historical Illustration of Main Street in Farmville, VA. Farmville was formed in 1798. In the 1850's, wealthy Farmville citizens subsidized the building of the new Southside Railroad, including the expensive High Bridge, so that the railroad could be routed through Farmville. Samuel David Dunavant was born in this town in 1839. (Image posted at DowntownFarmville.com)



Dunavant Events in VA: 1838 - 1850 (Preliminary Research)

Notes: (1) The Dunavant siblings - William, Samuel, Mary/Mollie and Sarah/Sallie - were the children of William Henry Dunavant and the grandchildren of Pemberton Dunavant. Pemberton had large farms in both Buckingham and Nottoway (formerly Amelia) Counties. (2) This map below is a modern map. The counties mentioned in historical records had different boundaries and so historical maps should be referenced as needed. Statements should be reviewed for accuracy as new research sources become available.



A - Buckingham County

- 1860: Census Report showed "Pemberton Dunivant" family residing in Buckingham Co. District 2. His grandson's wedding announcement referred to "William P. Dunavant of Buckingham" so Buckingham must have been his primary residence at that time. (Wedding was in January.)
- 1866: William Henry Dunavant, a widower, married America Mason of Buckingham Co.
- 1880: U.S. Census showed William Henry Dunavant and his family living in Curdsville, Buckingham Co. Household included DeWitt, infant son of William Henry Dunavant and America Dunavant.

Dunavant Events in VA: 1851 - 1915 (Preliminary Research)

Farmville - Petersburg Rail Service

By 1856, Pemberton Dunavant's family could have travelled 23 miles (about one day by horse) from Enonville to Farmville. At Farmville, they could have caught the Southside Railroad to Petersburg or Lynchburg.

Dillwyn - Richmond Rail Service

The first train arrived at the Dillwyn Station in 1892. The Buckingham Branch Railroad extended from Dillwyn to Brems Bluff and was less than 15 miles long. One could then have taken the Norfolk & Western Railroad from Brems Bluff to Richmond.

B - Lynchburg, VA

- Abt. 1856: William Pemberton Dunavant worked as superintendent with the Orange & Alexandria Railroad, probably to extend it from Charlottesville to Lynchburg.
- 1860: First daughter of W.P. Dunavant and B.F. Anderson born, Dora Clark Dunavant (later, Mask). (October Birth)
- 1881: William Pemberton Dunavant's family visits relatives in Lynchburg.
- 1899: After their wedding, Lottie Godsey and J.V. Gills settled in Lynchburg.
- 1914: Henry Jackson Dunavant built the Amherst-Tye River line near Lynchburg.

C - Farmville, VA

- 1854: Farmville-Petersburg connected by RR

F - Richmond, VA

- 1860: WP Dunavant - Anderson wedding in Richmond (and Petersburg) papers.
- 1874: Lottie Godsey born in Richmond.
- 1899: Lottie Godsey married J.V. Gills.
- 1908: Sarah Dunavant Hopkins died.
- 1915: Mary "Mollie" Dunavant Godsey died.

G - Cumberland County, VA

- 1860: William Pemberton Dunavant married Bettie F. Anderson, daughter of lawyer, John R. Anderson.

H/I - Enonville/ Dillwyn (Buckingham Co.)

- 1892: Dillwyn-Richmond connected by RR.
- 1901: William Henry Dunavant died and C.D. McCraw put estate up for sale.

Curdsville (Between Dillwyn and Farmville)

- 1870: Census Report showed Pemberton and Mary Dunavant living in Curdsville.
- 1900: U.S. Census showed "William H. Dunavant" (age 85) living in the West Part of the Curdsville District. He was head of household, living with is wife, "America Dunavant" (age 75), nephew "John H. Dunavant" (age 50), a cook and a servant.

Cornelius Dunavant settled in Henrico County, VA, in or near Richmond in the late 1600's. Many Dunavant families of Virginia's Southside Region are descended from Cornelius and Elizabeth: they were early settlers and many of their descendants had large farming families. Several researchers have reported that Pemberton Dunavant was descended from Cornelius and Elizabeth. By 1760, the descendants of Cornelius and Elizabeth had moved beyond today's Richmond metro area (including Charles City, Henrico County and Chesterfield County) into counties further west. The spelling "Dunnavant" was more common than "Dunavant" in VA so Virginian census takers, newspapers, etc., often used the more familiar variation.

The research shown below includes some information from the online postings of Gay Mathis ("Obion Co. TN Branches and Twigs"), Christy Hinkle, and others.

Cornelius Dunavant (Various Last Name Spellings)
Born Abt 1650 in England
Possible Immigration to Annapolis MD
Mar'd About 1681 in 1 Charles City, VA
Died Abt 1701

Elizabeth Hodges
Born 1660 in Accomack, VA
Mar'd Abt 1681 in Charles City, VA
Died 1721 in Chowan, NC

William Dunavant (I)
Born About 1685 in Charles City, VA
Mar'd 1710 in Henrico Co., VA
Died Bef 1758 in Chesterfield Co., VA

Elizabeth Andrews
Born Abt 1693 in Charles City, VA
Mar'd 1710 in Henrico Co, VA
Died 1732 in Henrico Co, VA

William Dunavant (II)
Born Abt 1712 in Henrico Co., VA
Mar'd Abt 1755
Died Aft 1780 in Amelia Co., VA

Mary Long
Born Abt 1730 in VA
Mar'd Abt 1755
Died Aft 1780

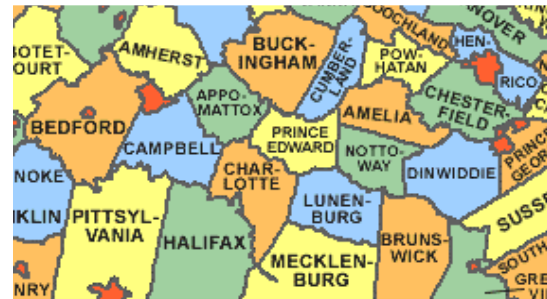
William Dunavant (III) (Rev. War Patriot)
Born Abt 1760 in Amelia Co., VA
Mar'd 1780 in Amelia Co., VA
Discharged from Revolutionary War service as a Private, he was approved for a Veteran's Pension from VA.
Died 1836 in Nottoway Co., VA

First Wife:
Susanna Pemberton Smith
Mar'd 1780 in Amelia Co. in VA
Died Bef 1803

Second Wife:
Sarah

The Southside Region of Virginia

Traditionally, the term "Southside" referred to the portion of VA east of the Blue Ridge Mountains and south of the James River. While Southside has long been known for its isolated, rural, and culturally conservative character, it is now becoming more linked to the growing Richmond metro area. The region includes several counties where Dunavant families are known to have settled: Amelia, Nottoway, Buckingham, Prince Edward, and Halifax Counties. Southside was long known for its tobacco crop, and some cold-hardy varieties of cotton also grew there.



Virginian Dunavant Ancestry (Earlier): From England to Southside VA (Preliminary Research)

"Clarke and Others v. Dunnivant" (A Probate Case Decided by the Virginia Court of Appeals in 1839)

The will of William Dunavant III, a Revolutionary War Patriot, gave only one dollar to each family member, with two exceptions: his son Pemberton Dunavant and his grandson Edgar Dunavant. The will provided that Pemberton Dunavant receive all land, including the Nottoway County farm, and ten Slaves. Edgar Dunavant (the only living child of Pemberton's deceased son John W. Dunavant) was to receive \$100 and an education. (William had obviously been a successful farmer, but the Court noted that he could neither read nor write near the end of his life. William's provision for his grandson indicated the value he placed on formal education.) Other family members challenged the will, taking the position that William did not have sufficient mental capacity at the time the will was created. During probate, only one of William's sons, Pemberton, was still living. William's daughter Susan Dunavant Clarke and her husband, Pleasant Clarke, challenged the will. His other daughter, Sally Dunavant Butcher, was deceased but her husband, John Butcher, appealed on behalf of their six children. "Clarke and Others v. Dunnivant" was not decided by the Court of Appeals in Richmond until 1839: the will was upheld as written and Pemberton Dunavant became a wealthy man.

(The research shown below includes some information from the online postings of Gay Mathis, Christy Hinkle, and others.)

William Dunavant (III) Rev. War Patriot and Owner of a Large Farm in Nottoway County, VA
Born 1760 in Amelia Co., VA. Married 1780 in Amelia Co., VA. Died 1836 in Nottoway Co., VA.
Discharged from Rev. War service as a Private, he was approved for a Veteran's Pension.

First Wife: **Susannah Pemberton Smith**
Married 1780, Amelia Co., VA. Died Before 1803.
Second Wife: Sarah

Pemberton Dunavant, Owner of Large Farms in Nottoway and Buckingham Counties
Born 1791 in Nottoway Co, VA. Mar'd to "Mary" Abt 1783 in Charlotte Co., VA.
Died Aft 1870. Served as a Private in VA Militia during the War of 1812. Census reports from 1830 - 1870 show Pemberton and Mary in Buckingham Co, VA. (1870 Census showed Curdsville as their town.) Inherited father's farm in Nottoway (formerly Amelia) Co., VA.

John W. Dunavant
Born (1780-1790) in VA.
Died 1821, Nottoway Co., VA.
Lived with father until he died.
As of 1839 court record, John had one living child, Edgar Dunavant.

Susan Dunavant Clarke
Wife of Pleasant Clarke.

Sally Dunavant Butcher
Wife of John M. Butcher.
Died Abt 1828 in VA.

William Henry Dunavant, Owner of a Large Tobacco Farm in Enonville, Buckingham County, VA - Born in Prince Edward Co. in 1814. Died 1901; buried in Enonville, Buckingham Co. His earlier wife and the probable mother of William, Samuel, Mary ("Mollie") and Sarah Dunavant: **Elizabeth Warriner Dunavant**.

Capt. Samuel David Dunavant, Railroad Contractor
Born 1839 in Farmville, VA. Married Mary "Virginia" Corpening in Burke Co., NC. and settled there. He died in 1906 and was buried in Morganton, NC.

Col. William Pemberton Dunavant, Railroad Contractor.
Born 1837 in Buckingham, VA. Married Elizabeth "Bettie" Frances Anderson in VA and settled in Memphis, TN.
Died 1891 and was buried in Memphis, TN.

Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey
(1844-1915)

Sarah ("Sallie"?) Ann Dunavant Hopkins
(1841-1908)

VA Dunavant Ancestry (Later): From Southside VA to Morganton NC, Memphis TN, and Richmond VA

Additional Notes

Naming Patterns: Among Pemberton Dunavant's family, we see names that would be passed down among the descendants of Samuel David Dunavant (NC) and William Pemberton Dunavant (TN): Pemberton, Samuel, William, Henry, and DeWitt. Sam Dunavant was obviously proud of his Virginian heritage: he used ancestral names for his own children, and named one son "Virginius" - a practice often done to indicate descentance from an old Virginian family.

Associated Towns in Virginia: In Buckingham County: Buckingham, Curdsville, and Enonville. In Prince Edward County: Farmville. The location of the Dunavants' farm in Nottoway (formerly Amelia) County has not yet been determined.

Another Virginian Railroad Manager: Capt. J.P. Dunnivant*: "The Daily Press" of Newport News, VA (3-28-1905) stated the following: "Capt. Dunnivant, who has been a section master on the local Chesapeake & Ohio yard for the past 15 years, has been transferred to Elko, where he will have charge of a large force of men. Capt. Dunnivant has a wide circle of friends and acquaintances who will regret his departure." Another 1905 article mentioned that J.P. Dunnivant was visiting friends in Amelia in 1905. The Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad went through Buckingham Co. Given his name, profession, age, and friends in Amelia County, J.P. Dunavant *may* have been an extended relative of railroad contractors Samuel David Dunavant and William Pemberton Dunavant.

- Virginian Dunavant Ancestry Conclusions -

This narrative began with an introduction of four Dunavant siblings: Samuel David Dunavant of Morganton, NC, William Pemberton Dunavant of Memphis, TN; Mary "Mollie" E. Dunavant Godsey of Richmond, VA; and Sarah Ann Dunavant Hopkins of Richmond, VA.

The siblings' great-grandfather, William Dunavant III (1760-1836), was a documented Patriot in the Revolutionary War and he owned a large farm in Nottoway (formerly Amelia) County. Their grandfather, Pemberton Dunavant, inherited his father's Nottoway County farm but moved to Buckingham County, where he developed his own large farm. The siblings' father, William Henry Dunavant, owned a large tobacco farm in Enonville, Buckingham County. (William Henry Dunavant was born in Prince Edward County, and his son, Samuel David Dunavant, would be born there as well, in Farmville.)

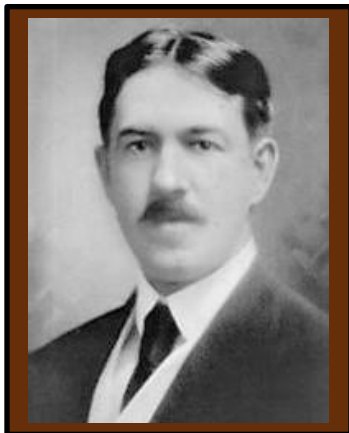
Pemberton Dunavant donated land for the construction of the first Enon Baptist Church in Buckingham County, and his son, William Henry Dunavant, remained a lifelong member of that church. Mollie and Sarah Dunavant continued the family's religious tradition, attending Baptist churches together in Richmond.

Other researchers have previously documented the descent of Pemberton Dunavant from Cornelius Dunavant and Elizabeth Hodges, who were married in VA about 1681. If their research is correct, these Dunavants arrived in Virginia during the colony's first 75 years. Their descendants migrated from the Richmond Metro Area (Charles City, Henrico County and Chesterfield County) to Amelia County (later split into Nottoway and Prince Edward Counties) - then on to Buckingham County, the geographical center of VA.

By the early 1800's, William Dunavant III had attained modest wealth through farming. Thereafter, some of his male descendants, including Samuel David Dunavant and William Pemberton Dunavant, would be formally educated.

As the family's attention turned to railroad building in the mid-1800's, the Dunavants continued to prosper. At least three Dunavant-related men had railroad management careers that started in VA: Samuel D. Dunavant (Morganton, NC), William P. Dunavant (Memphis, TN), and Robert H. Godsey (Richmond, VA; Mollie Dunavant's husband). The Dunavant family's history would become entwined with the Reconstruction's booming railroad industry in VA, NC and TN.

* Appreciation is expressed for the many valuable research contributions of Villy Korovesi Robertson. *



**Henry Jackson
"Jack" Dunavant
(1875 – 1928)**

**Charlotte – Based
Railroad Contractor**

Son of
Railroad Contractor
Samuel "Sam" David Dunavant
and
Virginia Corpening Dunavant
of
Morganton, North Carolina



Railroad Builders:

THE DUNAVANT FAMILY of VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA and TENNESSEE

**Supplement: The Family of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant,
and Related Families**

Christopher Hunt Robertson, M.Ed.

North Carolina
Society of Historians
2015 Willie Parker Peace
History Book Award
- and the -
2015 Robert Bruce Cook
Family History Book Award



**Louise Wert Dunavant
(1886 – 1967)**

**Founder of Charlotte's
Carolina Golf Club**

Daughter of
Attorney
Frank Owen Wert
and
Lucy Price Crow Wert
of
Chattanooga, Tennessee



Railroad Builders: The DUNAVANT FAMILY of VIRGINIA, NORTH CAROLINA and TENNESSEE

- Supplement: Family of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant, and Related Families -

Dedicated to these Dunavant builders:

Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant

C. H. Robertson, M.Ed.
Email: CRob2011@hotmail.com

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Special thanks to these major family contributors:

Anthoula Lambrou Korovesi Robertson ("Villy") -and- Thomas Johnston Robertson ("Tom")
Virginia Louise Robertson von Paffen ("Louise")
Bertha Jane Owen Dunavant ("Bertha Jane") -and- Samuel Jackson Dunavant II ("Jack")
Dotty Alexander -and- William Sutton Alexander II ("Sutt")
Lila Saunders Rankin ("Peaches")

And to these dedicated professional contributors:

Gay Mathis, Christy Hinkle, Cynthia Sexton and Ray Yount, Genealogists
Matt Bumgarner, Railroad Historian, Tarheel Press, Hickory, NC
Gale Benfield, Curator, NC Room of the Burke County Library, Morganton, NC
Janey Deal, Curator, NC Room of the Patrick Beaver Library, Hickory, NC
Jane Johnson, Manager, NC Room of the Charlotte - Mecklenburg County Library, Charlotte, NC
Joel Reese, Curator, NC Room of the Iredell County Library, Statesville, NC
Zoe Rhine, Curator, NC Room of the Pack Library, Asheville, NC
Dottie Ervin, Director, Historic Burke Foundation, Morganton, NC
Staff of the State Library and Archive of NC in Raleigh, the Library of VA in Richmond, and the Wilson Library at the University of North Carolina in Chapel Hill
Ginny Erwin and Sybil Argintar (Nomination of Morganton's Dunavant Cotton Manufacturing Company to the National Historic Register of Burke County, NC)
Claudia Brown and Annie McDonald, NC State Historic Preservation Office (Review of the Dunavant Nomination)

Some Families Related by Marriage to Dunavant Ancestors and Descendants:

Greece:	Korovesi
NC:	Alexander, Beaver, Corpening, DeBow, Dula, Eagles, Estes, Graham, Harris, Henkel, Horton, Johnston, Rankin, Spilman, Summerville, White
SC and NC:	Robertson
TN/AL/GA:	Cowan, Crow, Hunt, Kyle, Thaxton, Wert
VA:	Anderson, Holt, Easley, Gills, Godsey, Hopkins, Owen, Ramboa, Warriner

Research was primarily based on newspaper archives, census reports, D.A.R. research, obituaries and other published materials. All images of individuals shown herein were provided by the family contributors named above, unless otherwise noted. Contributors did not preview the entire book so any errors should be attributed to the author only.

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LINEAGE CHART	97 - Lineage Chart of the Western NC Dunavant Family (and Related Families)
Available from Lulu Press Inc. (Author: C.H. Robertson, M.Ed.)	The publication that includes the material referenced above is entitled, " <i>Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of Virginia, North Carolina and Tennessee, and Families Related by Marriage</i> ".
Supplement Addendum A (1908 - 1987) Children of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant	Children of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant: S-9 - Virginia Ann Dunavant (Charlotte, NC) and Some Marriage-Related Families (Robertson, Johnston, Hunt) S-19 - (Twin) Louise Dunavant (Charlotte, NC) and a Marriage-Related Family (Alexander) S-22 - (Twin) Samuel Jackson Dunavant I (Charlotte, NC and Halifax, VA) and Some Marriage-Related Families (Easley, Holt, Kyle)
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ADDENDUM A

- In this supplement, all uses of "Jack" refer to Henry Jackson "Jack" Dunavant unless otherwise noted.
- Historical newspaper articles usually referred to him as "H.J. Dunavant".

Family and Marriage-Related Ancestors of

Henry Jackson Dunavant

and Louise Wert Dunavant



HENRY JACKSON DUNAVANT
(1875 - 1928)
Railroad Contractor (Southern States)
Son of Capt. Samuel David Dunavant



LOUISE WERT DUNAVANT
(1886 - 1967)
Founder of the Carolina Golf Club
(Charlotte, NC)



Dunavant Home - Commissioned by Henry Jackson Dunavant.
Built in 1915 by R.L. Goode in the Myers Park neighborhood of Charlotte, NC.



DUNAVANT DESCENDANTS

Louise Wert Dunavant and Her Twin Children (Circa 1909 to 1913)

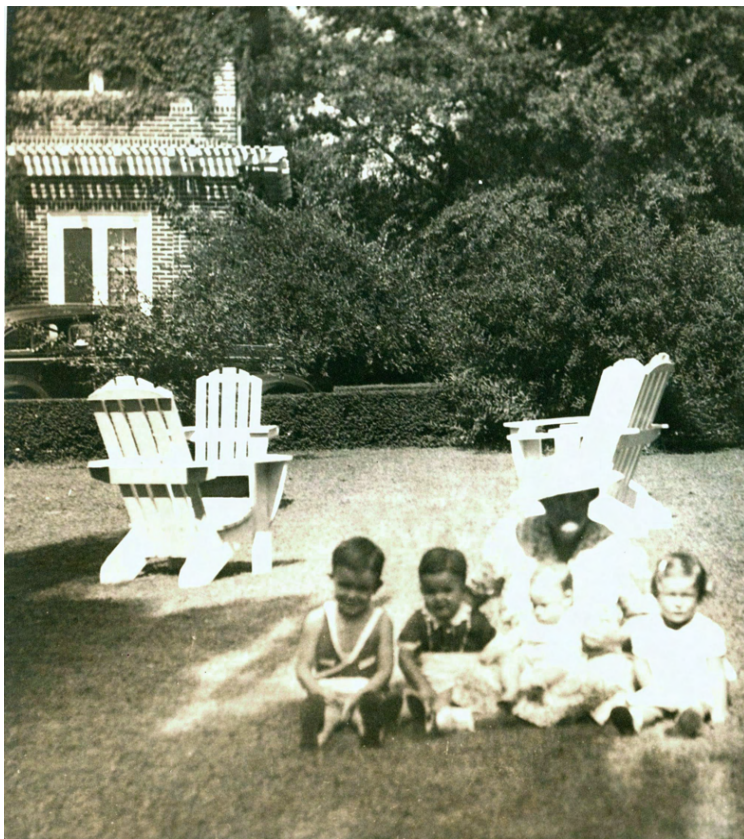
Upper Left Photo: Louise Wert Dunavant with her twins: Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant I and Louise Wert Dunavant (Alexander).

Lower Right Photo: Louise Wert Dunavant with twins, Jack and Louise. Virginia had not yet been born so the third child's identity is unknown.

Lower Center Photo: Dunavant and Henkel party.

Lower Left Photo: Dunavant twins playing with friends.





DUNAVANT DESCENDANTS

Louise Wert Dunavant and Her Grandchildren

Left Photo:

Louise Wert Dunavant with some of her grandchildren
(named left to right):

- Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant II
- "James" Easley Dunavant
- William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander II
- Virginia "Louise" Robertson

Below Photo (1920): Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert Dunavant at their home. Both photos show their home, located at 1040 Queens Road in Charlotte, NC.





Easter 1942 Charlotte, NC

Seated (Left to Right)

"Virginia" Ann Dunavant Robertson
holding:

Charles "Charley" Hunt Robertson II

Virginia "Louise" Robertson

Louise Wert Dunavant
(Mrs. H.J. Dunavant) holding:

Thomas "Tom" Johnston Robertson

William Sutton Alexander II

Louise "Lou" Dunavant Alexander
(Twin)

James Dunavant

Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant I
(Twin)

Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant II

Standing (Left to Right)

Charles Hunt Robertson I

William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander I



ADDENDUM A - 1

**Child of Henry Jackson Dunavant
and Louise Wert Dunavant:**

Virginia Ann Dunavant Robertson Turner (1917-1987)

In Charlotte, NC

Marriage-Related Families: Hunt (of TN and NC), Johnston (of NC),
Robertson (of SC and NC)



DUNAVANT DESCENDANT

"Virginia" Ann Dunavant Robertson Turner

Born 1917 in Charlotte, NC
Died 1987 in Greenville, SC

Daughter of:

- Henry Jackson Dunavant
- Louise Wert Dunavant

Younger Sibling of:

- Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant I (Twin)
- Louise "Lou" Dunavant Alexander (Twin)

Wife of:

- Charles Hunt Robertson I (Divorced 1951)
- George Turner

Mother of:

- Virginia "Louise" Robertson
- Charles "Charley" Hunt Robertson II
- Thomas "Tom" Johnston Robertson

In the top photo, Virginia is sitting on a sofa with her mother, Louise Wert Dunavant. At the young age of ten, Virginia experienced her father's death and the impact of that death on her family.

As an adult, she was often described as "a sweet spirit - kind and generous, with a good sense of humor". In 1935, Virginia Ann Dunavant married Charles Hunt Robertson I. (Many of their descendants still reside in NC and SC.) After a divorce, she later enjoyed a happy marriage with George Turner of Savannah, GA. She lived in, and expanded, the Dunavants' Myers Park home in Charlotte.



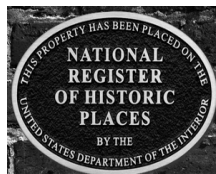
JUDGE WILLIAM ROSS ROBERTSON I (Excerpt from Obituary of 5-13-1885 in "The News and Herald")

There have been few men more actively and continuously identified with the public affairs of Fairfield than William R. Robertson. Born in the Longtown section on the 30th of November, 1818, he spent among this people the long life that ended peacefully last Wednesday afternoon. Judge Robertson was the son of Thomas Robertson and the grandson of Captain Robertson, who served in the Revolutionary War, commanding a company in the Battle of Eutaw Springs. He received a sound common school education, and afterwards studied law in Winnsboro, under the Hon. Joseph Woodward. He was admitted to the bar in December, 1840, and practiced for a time in partnership with Jno. M. McCall. He was married in 1844 to Miss Elizabeth C. Rabb, a most estimable lady of this county. Of this marriage there were three children, only one of whom is now living: T. R. Robertson, Esq., of Charlotte, North Carolina. Judge Robertson was, until very late years, a man of extraordinary physical vigor ... From an early period in life, Judge Robertson took an active part in public affairs, and was called to many positions of public trust. In 1846, he was elected Intendent of Winnsboro. In 1848, he was sent to the House of Representatives, and was re-elected in 1850. In 1852, he was elected by the Legislature to the important post of Commissioner in Equity for Fairfield District, and in this office served with the greatest credit for twelve years - then declining another term ... After the war he was elected District Judge for Fairfield County ..."

(The portrait shown left is of Judge Robertson. He and his wife were interred at St. John's Cemetery in Winnsboro.)



Shown left is "Rural Point", the Robertson-Doty House on Old Camden Road in Winnsboro. Built by Judge William Ross Robertson I in 1852, Rural Point is noted for its architecture, garden, and hospitality. This Greek Revival, one and one-half story house stands over a high basement. It is sheathed in white clapboard with green louvered shutters. The semi-formal garden is said to have been designed by John Grimke Drayton, noted landscape architect of Magnolia Gardens in Charleston. A typical southern planter's office of white clapboard with green louvered shutters is on the landscaped grounds, which are enclosed by a white picket fence. (Adapted from the National Register documentation kept by the SC Dept. of Archives and History.) Following Judge Robertson's death in 1885, his widow sold Rural Point to the Doty family, and as of 2005, the Doty family still owned it.



Judge William Ross Robertson
(1818 - 1885)

Winnsboro, Fairfield Co., SC

**(Great-Grandfather of Charles Hunt Robertson I,
who was the husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)**

The history of the Robertson family of Winnsboro can be found in "The Autobiography and Ancestry of Judge William Ross Robertson of Winnsboro, SC and Charlotte, NC", published by Lulu Press, Inc.

**Thomas Ross Robertson I (1849-1922)
Adjutant General of the NC National Guard**



"General Robertson's
Body to Arrive Today:
Former Prominent Citizen Died at Home
in Morganton Monday Night"

("Charlotte Observer" Obituary of 7-26-1922)

General Thomas Ross Robertson, aged 73 years, father of Major. W.R. Robertson and Miss Julia Robertson, of this city, died Monday night about midnight at his home in Morganton. The body will arrive in Charlotte this morning.

The funeral services will be held at the home of his daughter, Miss Julia Robertson, tomorrow afternoon at 5 o'clock, the bishop coadjutor of the Episcopal diocese and rector of St. Peter's Episcopal Church officiating.

Major Robertson had been in Morganton for several days before the death of his father and he will accompany the body to Charlotte.

General Robertson was born in Winnsboro, SC, April 24, 1849, and was the son of the late Judge William R. Robertson and Mrs. Elizabeth Robertson, of Winnsboro, both of whose families had been influential in that state since colonial days.

Mrs. Robertson, first wife of the general, and formerly Miss Cora Johnston, of this city, died in 1901, and five years later General Robertson married Miss Jean Clarkson, of Hay Market, VA.

Since his last marriage, General Robertson had made his home in Raleigh because of his connection with the state officers. During the administration of Governor Glenn, General Robertson was adjutant general of the state and he had been one of the foremost factors in the North Carolina National Guard for years.

He was Clerk of the Court for Mecklenburg County for one term and was also Postmaster of Charlotte during Cleveland's second administration. He practiced law in this city for a number of years.

General Robertson is survived by one son, Major W.R. Robertson, and two daughters, Miss Julia Robertson, of this city, and Mrs. E.M. Brevard, of Tallahassee, Fla. On account of illness, Mrs. Brevard will be unable to come to Charlotte for the funeral.

W.R. Robertson, of Richmond, Va., a brother-in-law of General Robertson, is in the city for the funeral, and William J. Andrews, of Raleigh, will accompany the body to Charlotte.

Added Notes:

- General Thomas Ross Robertson I was born in Winnsboro, SC. His parents were Judge William Ross Robertson I (1818-1885) and Elizabeth Caroline Rabb (Born 1826). His first wife was Mary Cora Johnston (1852-1901).
- He was the first of Judge Robertson's family to move his residence to Charlotte, NC, probably about 1862. (The judge maintained lifelong residence in Winnsboro, SC, but he established lasting ties to Charlotte by investing in the Charlotte & SC Railroad and in Charlotte's Ada Cotton Mill.)
- In Charlotte, T.R. Robertson I served as Postmaster from 1893 to 1896.
- In Raleigh, he was the Adjutant General of the NC National Guard from 1905 to 1907, and he also served as the Superintendent of Public Buildings and Grounds.

**Thomas Ross Robertson I (1849 - 1922)
Winnsboro, SC -and- Charlotte, NC
(Grandfather of Charles Hunt Robertson I, who was the husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)**



Left Photo: Family of Thomas Ross Robertson I and Mary Cora Johnston Robertson

- Seated Left to Right:
 - William "Will" Ross Robertson II (1874-1950)
 - Mary "Cora" Johnston Robertson (1852-1901)
 - Thomas Ross Robertson I (1849-1922), Adj. General of NC National Guard
- Standing Left to Right:
 - Elizabeth "Bess" Caroline Robertson (1876-1961) (Wife of Dr. Ephraim Mays Brevard) *
 - Thomas "Ross" Robertson II (1875-1895)
 - "Julia" Johnston Robertson (1878-1966)

* Elizabeth Robertson Brevard is presented in Two Thousand Notable Americans (J.M. Evans; 1984, 2nd Edition; American Biographical Institute).

The home of T.R. Robertson's family was located at 417 West Trade St. in Charlotte, NC.



Above Portrait: Mary Cora Johnston Robertson

Thomas Ross Robertson I was the first generation of the Winnsboro SC Robertson family to settle in Charlotte, NC. When he married Mary Cora Johnston of NC in 1871, her father, William Johnston (1817-1896) was serving as president of the "Charlotte and SC Railroad". Her father would later serve as Mayor of Charlotte for two terms: 1875-1878 and 1885-1887.

Family of General Thomas Ross Robertson I Charlotte, NC

**(Grandfather of Charles Hunt Robertson I, who was
the husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)**

Army (World War I) Colonel William Ross Robertson II (1874-1950)

"Col. W.R. Robertson Is Injured Fatally"

Obituary from Newspaper Clipping Kept By Descendants
(Neither the newspaper's name nor the date was identified.)

Col. William Ross Robertson, 76, prominent Charlotte citizen and veteran Army officer with service on the Mexican border and in France, died yesterday in a fall from a Southern Railway passenger train near the Morrisfield crossing ...

Col. Robertson is survived by his wife, Mrs. Margaret Hunt Robertson, of the home, 101 Caswell Road; two sons, Col. William R. Robertson, Jr., Maxwell Field, Ala., and Charles H. Robertson, Charlotte; and two sisters, Mrs. E.M. Brevard, Tallahassee, Fla., and Miss Julia J. Robertson, Charlotte; and six grandchildren.

Funeral services will be conducted Monday afternoon at 3 o'clock at the Moravian Little Church on the Lane, of which he was a member. Dr. Herbert Spaugh, pastor, will conduct the rites. Burial will be in Elmwood Cem. Pallbearers will be Rufus M. Johnston, David G. Gibson, Louis G. Ratcliffe, Fred Hasty, Robin Kirby, and Francis Clarkson.

Col. Robertson was born January 30, 1874, in Winnsboro, SC, the son of the late Thomas Ross Robertson and Cora Johnston Robertson. He came to Charlotte at the age of 12.

He attended the Citadel and the University of North Carolina. In 1916, he served on the Mexican Border with the First North Carolina National Guard under Col. Gardner. Later, he attended the school of fire at Fort Sill, Okla., and afterwards was promoted to the rank of major and placed in charge of training the 15th Machine Gun battalion.

He took the battalion overseas in World War I, and attached to the 30th division, served until the war's end. He retired from the Army with the rank of colonel.

Colonel Robertson was active in the initial development of the American Legion and was the first commander of the Hornets Nest post of the Legion.

During the 1920's, he was the commissioner in charge of public safety in Charlotte for two terms. He was a member of the Masonic Lodge.

Colonel Robertson had been in declining health for approximately 15 years.



Added Notes:

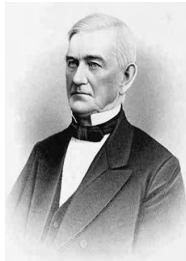
- Son of Adjutant General Thomas Ross Robertson I (1849-1922) and Mary Cora Johnston (1852-1901). Husband of Margaret Louisa Hunt (1889-1980).
- Student at the University of North Carolina (1891-1894) *
- Secretary of the Alexander F.D. Land. Co. (Real Estate and Insurance)
- Captain and Adjutant of NC National Guard (1913)
- Charlotte Justice of the Peace (1913)
- American Legion Auxiliary Commander of Mecklenburg County, NC (1919)
- City Commissioner of Charlotte - Public Safety Committee (1925-1929)
- Postmaster of Charlotte, NC (1934)

* UNC's yearbook, "The Hellenian" (Volume 1894), states that "William Ross Robertson of Charlotte, NC" played baseball 1892-1894 and was captain in 1894. He was also in the German Club and the University's Order of Gimghoul.

Col. William Ross Robertson II (1874 - 1950)

Charlotte, NC

(Father of Charles Hunt Robertson I, who was the husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)



In 1861, Wm. Johnston successfully sponsored a State measure to relieve Jews of political limitations.

SOURCE 1 (Continued)

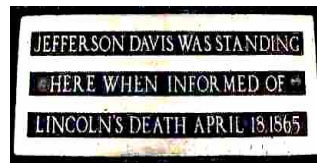
Some First Administration Accomplishments (1875-1878):

- * St. Peters Hospital (forerunner to Carolinas Medical Center) opened. It was the first civilian hospital in NC.
- * The rail track from Charlotte to Atlanta was completed.

Some Second Administration Accomplishments (1885-1887):

- * Railroad service was opened to Asheville, NC.
- * Buford Hotel opened in 1885. It became the home of some of Charlotte's most prominent citizens, including D.A. Tompkins.
- * Horse-drawn street cars began operating downtown in 1887.
- * The first electric street lights were installed in 1887.

An Historic Moment: On April 18, 1865, shortly after the Civil War ended, the former President of the Confederacy, Jefferson Davis, was with William Johnston in Charlotte. Davis' speech to a crowd was interrupted with an urgent note: Abraham Lincoln had been assassinated. ("The History of Mecklenburg Co., 1740 to 1900" by J.B. Alexander, M.D.) This brass plaque at S. Tryon St. and 4th St. marks the spot.



William Johnston's Political Career as Two-Term Mayor of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC

William Johnston (1817-1896) and Anne Eliza Graham (1827-1881) were the parents of Mary Cora Johnston (1852-1901). Mary Cora Johnston married Thomas Ross Robertson I, and their grandchild, Charles Hunt Robertson I, married Virginia Ann Dunavant.

The farm of William Johnston's parents was located about 15 miles from Charlotte, on the Catawba River. Johnston graduated from the University of NC at Chapel Hill, and became a planter, lawyer, banker, railroad executive and mayor.

SOURCE 1: Text adapted from a website maintained by the Mayor's Office of Charlotte, NC. (Engraving is from NCPedia.com.)

Public Service:

- Johnston was Mayor of Charlotte during the centennial celebration of the Mecklenburg Declaration of Independence, May 20th, 1875. He served two terms as Mayor, between 1875 and 1878 and again between 1885 and 1887.
- Johnston lost against Zebulon Vance for the NC governorship in 1862.

SOURCE 2:

PoliticalGraveyard.com (Website)

"JOHNSTON, William (1817-1896) of Charlotte, Mecklenburg County, NC.

Born March 5, 1817. Delegate to the NC Succession Convention, 1861. Mayor of Charlotte, NC, 1875-1878 and 1884-1887.

Died May 20, 1896. Interment at Elmwood Cemetery." NC."

Between 1799 and 1850, before the Civil War, a gold boom allowed the village of Charlotte to become a prosperous town. In 1835, a branch of the U.S. Mint was established in Charlotte, enhancing its position as a financial center.

In 1847, Charlotte's businessmen began to build the Charlotte & SC Railroad. Passenger service began in 1852, and in 1856, Johnston left his legal practice to serve as the railroad's president. During the Civil War, Johnston served as the Commissary General of NC, directing the state's railroads to move troops and supplies. The C&SCRR was damaged by Sherman's troops but, after the War, Johnston led its reconstruction. In 1869, the C&SCRR was absorbed by the Charlotte, Columbia & Augusta Railroad, with Johnston remaining as president.

Johnston's 17-year railroad management career ended in 1873. Afterwards, he helped to organize Charlotte's Commercial National Bank, the oldest national bank in NC. (It would evolve into today's Bank of America, one of the nation's largest banks.) Johnston would serve as mayor of Charlotte for two terms, 1875 to 1878, and again from 1885 to 1887.

William Johnston (1817 - 1896)
Charlotte, NC
(Great-Grandfather of
Charles Hunt Robertson I, who was the
husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)

William Johnston's Railroad and Banking Management Careers

William Johnston was President of the "Charlotte and SC Railroad", which ran from Charlotte, NC to Columbia, SC. This early railroad was key to Charlotte's growth. The C&SC began passenger service in 1852 and existed until 1869, after the Civil War, when it became part of the "Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta Railroad". William Johnston continued as President after the transition. An 1870 railroad timetable showed that his CC&A office was located in Charlotte. Following the Civil War, he took a lead role in financing and rebuilding the railroads of SC and NC.

"JOHNSTON, William. Lawyer, Confederate Officer, Railroad Owner, and Executive".

(Source: *Cyclopaedia of Eminent and Representative Men of the Carolinas of the Nineteenth Century*. Published 1892. Volume 2, Page 641-643. With portrait.)

JOHNSTON, William. Born 1817, Died 1896. "Born in what is now Gaston County. Lawyer, Businessman, Plank Road and Railroad Builder. After Civil War, spearheaded rebuilding of railroads from Charlotte to both Columbia and Statesville."

(*Dictionary of NC Biography*. Published 1988. Vol. 3, Pg. 310-311)

Johnston, SC, with a station on the CC&A Railroad, was named in his honor.

(Two historical markers stand in Johnston, SC.)

A daughter of William Johnston and Ann Eliza Graham, Julia M. Johnston, married Alexander Boyd Andrews - one of the most accomplished men in NC railroad history.

Note Regarding Ancestry: C.L. Hunter gave an extensive description of William Johnston's ancestor, James Johnston (1742-1805), in his book, "Sketches of Western NC, Historical and Biographical". James Johnston, from Lincoln Co., NC (formed out of Tryon Co.) was the Revolutionary War Colonel who commanded the Reserve in the Battle of Kings Mountain. He was a Tryon Co. Delegate at the 4th Provincial Congress of NC in April 1776, where the famous Halifax Resolves were adopted. (This was the first official action, of any colony, authorizing delegates to the Continental Congress to vote for independence.) James Johnston later became a State Senator for Lincoln Co. (1780-1782). Mr. Hunter lists the descendants of James Johnston, including "Col. Wm. Johnston, Present (1876) Mayor of Charlotte".

William Johnston (1817 - 1896)

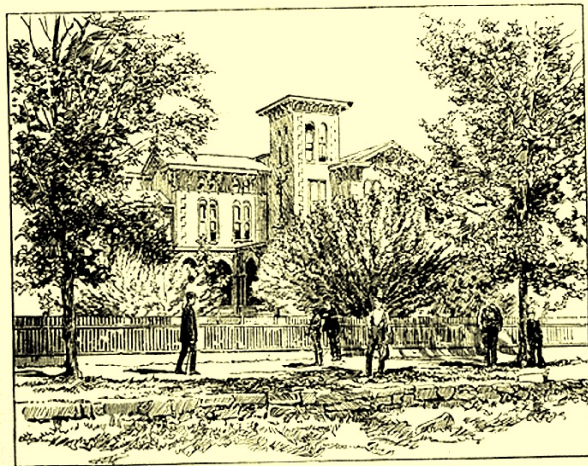
Charlotte, NC

(Great-Grandfather of Charles Hunt Robertson I, who was
the husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)



Charlotte, Columbia and Augusta Railroad (SC State Currency)

BANK DIRECTOR: The Carolina Room of the Charlotte - Mecklenburg Library holds a manuscript collection, entitled, "Commercial National Bank Papers". **The documents show that, in 1874, William Johnson and others signed an organization certificate for Charlotte's Commercial National Bank - a bank that would evolve into today's Bank of America, one of the nation's largest banks.** Commercial National Bank merged with American Commercial Bank in 1958, which then helped to form the NC National Bank in 1960. That bank was renamed Nations Bank in 1991, then renamed Bank of America in 1999.



RESIDENCE OF COLONEL WILLIAM JOHNSTON, MAYOR OF CHARLOTTE.

Landmark Home of WILLIAM JOHNSTON

Mayor of Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co., NC and President of the Charlotte & SC Railroad

The illustration above, drawn by Louis Joutel, appeared on page 268 in the 5-17-1884 edition of the national magazine, "Harper's Weekly." (State Archives of NC in Raleigh). In a later article, "The Center City", Dr. T.W. Hanchett, stated, "The handsome William Johnston mansion ... stood on West Trade at Graham" (Charlotte Meck. Historic Landmarks Commission). A "Charlotte Observer" article of 11-7-1934 placed Johnston's home where the Tate-Brown Co. and Charlotte Nat'l Bank then stood (Carolina Room, Charlotte Meck. Library). Next door, at the site of the former Bates home, where the Commercial National Bank later stood, a sidewalk plaque marks the spot where Confederate President Jefferson Davis was informed of President Lincoln's death.

Mayor Johnston was the President of Charlotte's first railroad, the Charlotte & SC Railroad. Interestingly, Charlotte's later Southern Railway Station, built in the early 1900's by Frank Milburn, included a central tower similar in size and style to Johnston's earlier home. One wonders whether the home of Charlotte's first railroad president may have inspired the design of Charlotte's later railroad station. (Compare the illustration above to the 1907 postcard image shown at right.)

George S.H. Appleget (1831-1880) designed the Raleigh house, shown at right, for Mayor Johnston's daughter and son-in-law. It was built in the Italianate style.

Like his daughter's house in Raleigh, Mayor William Johnston's house in Charlotte (left) was also in the Italianate style.

(Appleget is known to have worked in Charlotte, so he *may* have also designed Mayor Johnston's house. If so, it would have been designed before Appleget's death in 1880.)



Andrews-Duncan House (407 North Blount Street in Raleigh, NC). This home was designed in 1874 for one of the state's most renowned railroad leaders, Alexander Boyd Andrews, and his wife, Julia M. Johnston Andrews (a daughter of Charlotte Mayor William Johnston and Ann Eliza Graham).

(This 1967 photo was from "Reminiscences of a Raleigh Boy: Part I: Blount Street" by Karl Larson.)



Charlotte's Southern Railway Station
Built Early 1900's by Frank Milburn

Dr. Charles Washington Hunt I was born in 1854 in Chapel Hill, NC. In 1880, at age 26, he graduated from the College of Physicians and Surgeons of Baltimore in MD (recorded in the "Directory of Deceased American Physicians, 1804-1929 Edition"). That same year, he bought 2.25 acres of land in Transylvania Co., NC, and began his medical practice in Brevard - a town in a beautiful mountainous region known for its waterfalls. On 11-24-1886, at about age 32, Dr. Hunt married Henrietta Porcher Anderson (1868-1945) who was descended from several families prominent in Charleston, SC, and Georgetown, SC: the Anderson, Heriot and Porcher families. They were married at the Georgetown (Washington), DC, residence of the bride's mother, Henrietta Porcher Heriot Anderson, by Albert R. Stuart, Rector of Christ Episcopal Church. Their children would include Henrietta Hunt (born 1888), Margaret Louisa "Daidy" Hunt (1889-1980), Fanny B. Hunt Fonda (1895-1986), David Lutterloh Hunt (born 1897), and Charles Washington Hunt II (born 1910).

Dr. Hunt was very active professionally. His articles appeared in "The Journal of Medicine and Surgery" (1897), "Ellingwood's Therapeutist" (1908; Vol. 2), "The American Journal of Clinical Medicine" (1916; Vol. 2), "The Medical World" (1918), and "The Charlotte Medical Journal" (1919). His topics included childbirth, pain relief, dysentery, flu, and the health benefits of the Western NC climate. (He wrote under the names of C.W. Hunt and Charles W. Hunt.) As Health Superintendent of Transylvania Co., he coordinated his county's response to the 1919 Flu Epidemic. Per family lore, he was the first doctor in Western NC to use anesthesia and perform an appendectomy. Unusual for his era, his patients also included African-Americans and Native Americans.



College of Physicians & Surgeons (Est.1872)
Baltimore, MD. (1908 Postcard)



Hunt Cottages in Brevard, NC
(1910 Travel Brochure)

Dr. Charles Washington Hunt I

Born in Chapel Hill, NC - College Educated in Baltimore, MD - Resided in Brevard, NC

**(Grandfather of Charles Hunt Robertson I, who was
the husband of Virginia Ann Dunavant)**

In the "Sylvan Valley News" (predecessor of the "Brevard News") for 1900 – 1911, there are many references to Dr. Hunt, his family, and their property matters. The Transylvania Co. Register of Deeds Office counted 55 land transactions involving Dr. Hunt. On 12-31-1909, The "Sylvan Valley News" announced: "C.W. Hunt enters and claims 100 acres of land more or less lying in Dunn's Rock Township... Entered 12-21-1909." (Dunn's Rock is 5.5 miles south of Brevard.) The Biltmore Estate has archived letters (1903-1909) from "Dr. C.W. Hunt" regarding proposed land transfers. In 1917, Dr Hunt and others signed property over to Edith S. Vanderbilt and the Gloucester Lumber Co. following a Transylvania Co. Superior Court case. (In 1917, Edith was the widow of George Vanderbilt II. She owned the Biltmore Estate.)

Per family lore, Dr. Hunt's wife, Henrietta Porcher Anderson Hunt of Georgetown, SC, managed the "Hunt Cottages", where wealthy South Carolinians would spend their summers. She was described by her family as well educated and a great cook. After Dr. Hunt's death, she managed properties in Florida.



ADDENDUM A - 2

**Child of Henry Jackson Dunavant
and Louise Wert Dunavant:**

Louise Wert Dunavant Alexander (1908-1964)

In Charlotte, NC

Marriage-Related Families: Alexander (of NC)



The graves of Louise Dunavant Alexander and Sutt Alexander I are located in the Providence Presbyterian Church Cemetery of Charlotte, NC.



More information regarding William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander I, and his extensive development of Charlotte's Carolina Golf Club, can be found in the main edition of "Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of VA, NC and TN" by C.H. Robertson.

DUNAVANT DESCENDANT

Louise Wерт Dunavant Alexander "Louise" or "Lou"

Born 1908 in Statesville, NC
Died 1964

Daughter of:

- Henry Jackson Dunavant
- Louise Wерт Dunavant

Sibling of:

- Samuel Jackson Dunavant I (Her Twin)
- Virginia Ann Dunavant

Wife of:

- William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander I

Mother of:

- William Sutton "Sutt" Alexander II

In the photograph above, Louise is standing while her father, Henry Jackson Dunavant, tends to her younger sister, Virginia.

Louise attended Holton Arms, a preparatory school then located in Washington, DC. She also attended Mary Baldwin College in Staunton, VA.

"Lou" was described by her family as a devoted wife and mother. Her personality was described as delightful and a joy to many. She loved spending time with a wide circle of friends, and golf and horseback riding were among her favorite pastimes.

**Lineage and Ancestral History of
William Sutton Alexander I
Charlotte, NC
(Husband of Louise Dunavant Alexander)**

Descent of William Sutton Alexander I from Hezekiah Alexander I

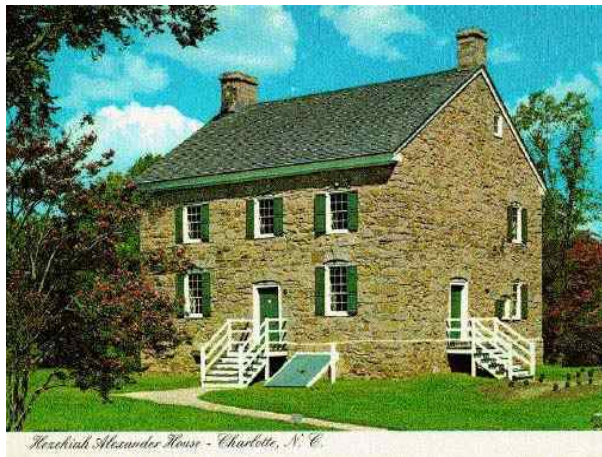
Hezekiah Alexander I (1721 - 1801) + Mary Sample (1734 - 1805)
Their Son: Oswald Alexander (1775 - 1826) + Sarah Sample (1768 - 1801)
Their Son: William Alfred Alexander (1803 - 1865) + Margaret Hayes (1801 - 1862)
Their Son: Wilson Watson Alexander (1845 - 1913) + Frances Elizabeth Williams (1851 - 1915)
Their Son: William Samuel Alexander (1874 - 1929) + Maggie Lou Patterson (1878 - 1969)
Their Son: William Sutton Alexander I (1906 - 1959) + Louise Dunavant (1908 - 1964)

(The research above was posted by Keith Montgomery at his website entitled,
"Montgomery and Rowntree Families and Genealogy", at MontyHistNotes.com.)

Left Photo: Louise D. Alexander holding W. Sutton "Sutt" Alexander II.

Center Photo: Built in 1774, the Hezekiah Alexander House is the oldest standing structure in Mecklenburg Co. and is maintained by the Charlotte Museum of History. Hezekiah Alexander (1721-1801) was born in Cecil County, MD. He moved to Charlotte, Mecklenburg Co., NC, where he was employed earlier as a blacksmith, and later as a planter. He was a founder of Queens College and a signer of the historic Mecklenburg Resolves in 1775.

Right Photo: Virginia "Louise" Robertson von Paffen, daughter of Virginia Ann Dunavant, provided some antique furniture to the Hezekiah Alexander House, the Latta Plantation House, and the Charlotte Museum of History for safekeeping. That furniture had been acquired by her grandmother, Margaret Hunt Robertson. Louise von Paffen also preserved many of the Dunavant family's photos.



Louise Robertson von Paffen
Contributor to the Alexander House



ADDENDUM A - 3

**Child of Henry Jackson Dunavant
and Louise Wert Dunavant:**

Samuel Jackson Dunavant I (1908-1959)

In Charlotte, NC -and- Halifax, VA

Marriage-Related Families: Easley (of VA), Holt (of VA), Kyle (of TN),
and Glen (of NC)



Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant I attended the Fishburne Military School in Virginia and he graduated from Central High School in Charlotte, NC.

He attended the University of North Carolina but left to help his family with a major project: the planning, building and marketing of the Carolina Golf Club in Charlotte, NC. This was Charlotte's first public golf course; it would not become private until 1958. This large-scale, costly project, launched during the Great Depression, was an enormous gamble for the Dunavant family and it required the entire family's support. Jack was very involved in the club's early years. The Carolina Golf Club was a great success then and it remains so today.

After his father's death, Jack managed the Dunavant Construction Company.



In World War II, he served in the Navy's construction battalion, the "Seabees", in the South Pacific.

Jack died of cancer and was buried near the Dunavant Mausoleum in the Elmwood Cemetery of Charlotte, NC.



DUNAVANT DESCENDANT

Samuel Jackson Dunavant I "Jack"

Twin of Louise Dunavant Alexander

Born 1908 in Statesville, NC
Died 1959 in Western NC

Son of: Henry Jackson Dunavant and
Louise Wert Dunavant

Sibling of: Louise Dunavant Alexander (His Twin)
and Virginia Ann Dunavant

Husband of: Bertha Glen Easley of Halifax, VA
(Daughter of James Stone Easley)

Father of:

- Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant II, who was born in 1934 in Charlotte, NC. (Jack Dunavant II and his wife, Bertha Jane Owen, of South Boston, VA, bought and restored the Easley home, "Woodland", in Halifax, VA.)
- James Easley Dunavant (Born 1936 in Charlotte, NC; Died 1999 in Halifax, VA.)

Left Photo: Jack I, as a student at the
Fishburn Military Academy of Virginia.

Center Top Photo: Jack I, on the photo's right side,
was identified on the back of the photo.
(The other man was not identified.)

Right Bottom Photo: Jack I, holding his son, Jack II.



Above Photo:

Seated Rear:

- Margaret Kyle Easley
- Robert Holt Easley
- Louisa Gilmer Easley
- James Stone Easley II

Seated Front:

- Bertha Easley Dunavant,
holding Samuel Jackson
"Jack" Dunavant II
- Samuel Jackson
"Jack" Dunavant I

Right Photo:

Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant
Finney (1910-1979)

Upper Right Photo:

St. John's Episcopal Church
Cemetery, where many Easley
and Dunavant family members
have been interred. (Photo by
"Idawriter" at Panoramio site.)



In 1932,
Bertha Glen Easley
married Samuel
Jackson "Jack"
Dunavant I, son of
Henry Jackson
Dunavant of
Charlotte, NC,
and grandson of
Samuel David
Dunavant of
Morganton, NC.

The family and
ancestry of
Bertha Glen Easley
Dunavant were well
established in
Halifax, VA.



**Family of
Samuel Jackson Dunavant I and
Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney
Halifax, VA**



State Senator James Stone Easley II (1885-1965) served as President of the VA Bar Association, President of the VA Chamber of Commerce, President of the VA Military Institute Board of Visitors, and as Founder and President of the Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation.

Much more information regarding Senator Easley is available in the family folder collection of the Halifax Public Library. Two articles in particular are rich with biographical details and interesting anecdotes: "James Stone Easley" by Samuel Jackson "Jack" Dunavant, II; and "Life and Times of James Stone Easley" by Bertha Jane Dunavant.

Senator James Stone Easley II
(Father of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney)
Halifax, VA

In 1901, Edmund Shaeffer of Lynchburg built "Woodland" on land owned by Robert Holt Easley, president of the Bank of Halifax and also Mayor of Halifax, VA. Ownership returned to the Easley family in 1912. Woodland was the scene of many happy times:

The Easleys entertained many distinguished guests. During the National Tobacco Festivals, they hosted dinners for 100 people. Guests included film actresses Mary Pickford and Martha Scott, Ambassador David Bruce, Postmaster General James Farley, Senators Harry Byrd and Carter Glass, Governors James Price and Bill Tuck, General George C. Marshall and composer and pianist, John Powell. Still on the property is a small log cabin built for the 20th century poet, Craddock Edmunds.

(Above adapted from "Mountain Road Walking Tour" at OldHalifax.com.)



"Woodland" was located off Mountain Road in Halifax, VA.

Woodland was built in the middle of rolling acreage. The Virginia Historical Society believed that its stained Queen Anne Victorian windows were among the state's finest.

In 1968, ownership of Woodland passed to Samuel "Jack" Dunavant II, son of Jack Dunavant I and Bertha Glen Easley. (Jack II grew up at Woodland and he graduated from UVA's Civil Engineering program. He was the brother of James Easley Dunavant.) From 1968 to 1973, Jack and his wife, Bertha Jane Owen of South Boston, VA, restored the house but it burned to the ground in 1974. The family of Jack Dunavant II still resides in a home built over the basement of Woodland's original structure.



Kenmore was a colonial brick home built by Hon. Samuel Meredith Garland in Amherst Co., VA. His granddaughter, Mildred Ellis, married Henry Aubrey Strode, who purchased Kenmore to create a college preparatory school. (Strode would move on to become the first president of Clemson College, now Clemson University, in SC.)

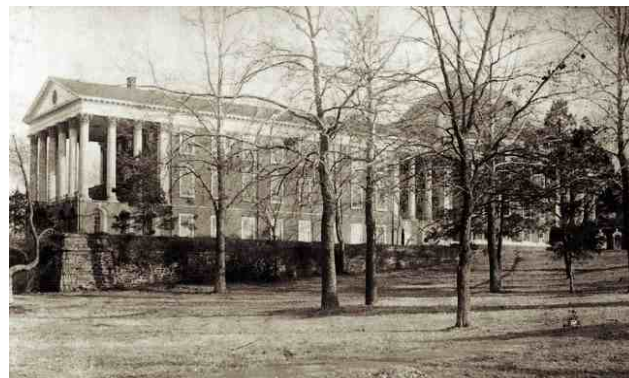
At the Kenmore School, Robert Holt Easley was educated well enough to gain admission to the University of VA Law School.

Above Left: Robert Holt Easley (1857-1941)
Grandfather of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney
Mayor of Halifax, First President of the Bank of Halifax, and Attorney.
Received his early education at Kenmore. Later received his B.Law degree from the Univ. of VA. Married Louisa Edmonia Gilmer in 1879. Father of State Senator James Stone Easley II, Mrs. John W. Riley, Mrs. John D. Evans (all of Halifax) and Mrs. William C. Lancaster of New York City.

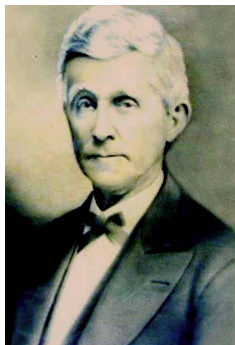
Above Right: Louisa Edmonia Gilmer Easley (1858-1938)
Grandmother of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney. Her parents were Judge George Gilmer of Pittsylvania Co. and Elizabeth Cabell Carrington (a descendant of the fourteenth Governor of Virginia, William Henry Cabell).

Both were buried at St. John's Episcopal Church in Halifax, VA.

**Paternal Grandparents of
Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney
(Wife of Samuel Jackson Dunavant I)
Halifax, VA**



Between 1853 and 1895, law classes at the Univ. of VA took place in the Rotunda and its Annex (shown above). In 1895, long after R. H. Easley's enrollment, a fire gutted both buildings and the Rotunda was rebuilt.



James Stone Easley I (1802-1879)

Great-Grandfather of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney

James Stone Easley I (1804-1879) was the business partner of James Bruce, the third millionaire in the United States. He had 400,000 acres of land in seven western states. His papers on Iowa land grants are considered to be the best existing by the Alderman Library at the Univ. of Virginia. The Spring 1963 edition of the Harvard School of Business Administration Magazine gave a summary of these papers and concluded that Mr. Easley's success was "an apt demonstration of the entrepreneurial talent that built America".

**Paternal Great-Grandparents
of Bertha Glen Easley
Dunavant Finney
(Wife of Samuel Jackson Dunavant I)
Halifax, VA**



Both homes contribute to the Mountain Road Hist. District.



Left: "Magnolia Hill" was the home of James Stone Easley I and his wife from 1843. This dwelling, at 160 Mountain Road, is an excellent example of the Greek Revival architecture of the type popular in Southside Virginia from the 1830's through the 1850's.

The architect-builder of Magnolia Hill (left), Grand Oaks (below), and St. John's Episcopal Church (all located on Mountain Road in Halifax), was Dabney Cosby. Cosby was born about 1793 in VA and he built a number of substantial homes in that state. (He is also said to have worked with Thomas Jefferson on some of the original buildings of the University of VA.) In 1837, Cosby built his own home, "Woodside", in Halifax, VA, and his daughter remained there for many years. After 1840, Cosby lived in Raleigh, NC, where he worked on public buildings. He died in 1862 and was buried in the cemetery of St. John's Episcopal Church in Halifax.

Source: "Mountain Road Walking Tour" (Posted on a website of the Halifax Co. Chamber of Commerce Tourism Committee)

Elizabeth Smith Holt Easley

(1807-1886) was the wife of James Stone Easley I: RootsWeb for St. John's Episcopal Church ("Halifax County Cemeteries "E" Surnames) lists the wife of James Stone Easley I as "Mrs. Elizabeth S. Easley - Aged 79 Years".

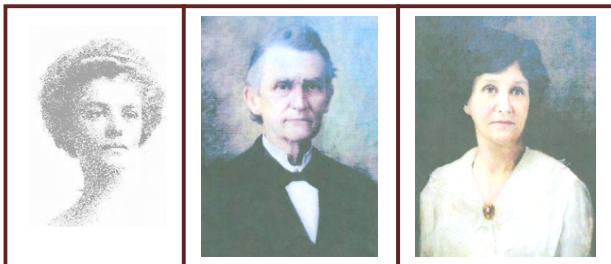


"Grand Oaks", the Holt family's home, was built in an 1820's style. It was later purchased by Colonel Vaughn of Philadelphia, who then renovated it to Colonial Revival. This was one of Mountain Road's earlier substantial structures, encouraging the road's development as a residential community for some of the county's prominent citizens.

JUDGE HUGH GRAHAM KYLE

"With the legal and judicial history of Tennessee, the name of Kyle has long been associated and in his own career Judge Hugh Graham Kyle is adding new luster to an untarnished family record. In banking and in business circles too, he has proven his forcefulness and resourcefulness and in public office has given evidence of his loyalty to the highest and best interests of the community. He makes his home at Rogersville, where he was born on the 27th of December, 1849, his parents being Absalom Arthur and Mary Ann (Graham) Kyle. The ancestral line can be traced back to Robert Kyle, who came from County Tyrone, Ireland, to the new world about the year 1790 and established his home in Hawkins county, Tennessee. He wedded Leah Brooks and they became parents of a son, whom they called Absalom Kyle and who in turn wedded Barsheba Cobb. This worthy couple became the grandparents of Hugh Graham Kyle..."

(Excerpt from "Tennessee the Volunteer State 1769 - 1923"; Vol. 3)



Left: Margaret Glen "Margie" Kyle Easley (1881-1968)
Mother of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney
Daughter of Judge and Mrs. Kyle of Rogersville, TN
Buried: St. John's Episcopal Church in Halifax, VA

Center: Judge Hugh Graham Kyle (1849-1927)
Father of Margaret Glen Kyle Easley
Maternal Grandfather of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant

Right: Bertha Glen Kyle of Yadkin County, NC (1855-1934)
Mother of Margaret Glen Kyle Easley
Maternal Grandmother of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant

The gravestone for Judge and Mrs. Kyle is located at the Presbyterian Church Cemetery in Rogersville, Hawkins County, TN. The inscription includes this statement:

"Placed here by their only child,
Margie Kyle Easley, in
appreciation of a happy
Christian home."

(Margie Kyle Easley was the wife
of James Stone Easley II of
Halifax, VA.)

Maternal Relatives of Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney (Wife of Samuel Jackson Dunavant I) Rogersville, TN -and- Halifax, VA

"Hugh graduated from Princeton University in 1870, winning the Valedictorian Honors for his class. That same year he became the Editor and Publisher of the Weekly Reporter, the only newspaper then published in Hawkins County, TN. He was admitted to the Tennessee Bar Association in 1872, and in 1873 he established the private legal practice of McDermott & Kyle. In 1894, Hugh was elected Judge of the Chancery Court of the Twelfth Division of Tennessee for an eight-year term. He was elected to two additional terms before retiring from the bench in 1918. Judge Kyle was one of the founders of the Citizens Bank in Rogersville, the oldest and most prestigious bank in Hawkins County. Hugh also held senior positions in several mining and agriculture businesses. Hugh served as Mayor of Rogersville for two terms, and also served on the Board of Trustees for the University of Tennessee..."

The Kyles first arrived in America when Robert Kyle immigrated from Tyrone, Ireland in the mid 18th Century and purchased a piece of land in Buckingham County, VA in 1749. His youngest son, Captain Robert Kyle, served in the Revolutionary War in 1777 and later moved to Hawkins County, Tennessee, where he and his wife Leah reared a large family on their farm, Walnut Hill, west of Rogersville, Tennessee."

(The above excerpts are from a website maintained by the Kyle House Group, an international business and government relations group whose early history began in Rogersville, TN.)

"Love Story , Vintage 1872" (Regarding Hugh Graham Kyle)

By John Perry (A Reporter for the "Kingsport Times" during the 1970's)
(Punctuation and paragraphing were modified below, with a few passages removed.)

As the legend goes, 104 years ago, almost to the day, the beautiful Mollie Netherland put on her favorite riding habit, mounted her horse and rode out from Rogersville toward Kingsport. She was the daughter of Richard Netherland, who built the Netherland Inn ... and she was betrothed to a promising young Rogersville attorney, the dashing handsome Hugh Graham Kyle.

Theirs was one of those old-fashion romantic love stories. It both ended and began on that September day in 1872 on the Rogersville - Kingsport Road. Mollie never returned from that horseback ride. She was found dead along the road, thrown by her horse. The tragedy almost killed Kyle, too, who all the rest of his days carried a broken heart - her torch.

But let Antoinette Taylor, of 349 Sewanee Street, whose mother was Kyle's first cousin, tell the story as she remembers having heard it from childhood. This wonderful love story was one of my favorites:

When I was a junior in high school, I was ... to spend a week at "Cousin Hugh Kyle's" house to help entertain his two granddaughters. One afternoon, Cousin Hugh, who then was in his 80's, suggested his nephew, Hugh Kyle Robinson, of Newport, who also was a guest, take us for a drive so we could retrace the steps of Mollie's last journey... Since my mother had told me the whole story whenever I would ask for it, I was delighted to hear it from the lips of the hero. He spoke of Mollie as if it had all happened only the day before.

He said she had gotten about three miles out of Rogersville when apparently a stray piece of paper or something must have caused her horse to rear, throwing her from its back. With her foot caught in the stirrup, she was dragged quite a distance, until the horse tired. Cousin Hugh said it was his belief that her neck had been broken by the fall, but that her beauty had been preserved by her long, thick riding skirt, which had wrapped around her head.

When Mollie failed to return after the expected time, a group of young men rode out in search of her. Tragically, one of them was Cousin Hugh. As we followed the path of her fatal ride, he pointed out the very spot where he had found the body of his fiancé, all the while extolling her virtues and charm...

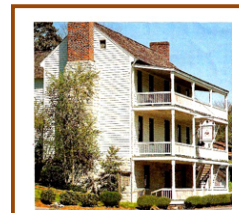
Cousin Hugh died the next year, and after returning from his funeral, I visited his room. There, more than 60 years after her death was Mollie's picture, still on his nightstand ...

Several years (*after Miss Netherland's death*), Hugh married a distant cousin from Virginia (*correction: North Carolina*), Bertha Glen ... I have often marveled since on the beautiful personality and extraordinary equanimity of Bertha Glen Kyle, who lived to celebrate their golden anniversary in peace and harmony, presiding over a home where all loved to gather. And never a cross word about the omnipresent picture.

"Cousin Hugh", in 1894, was elected as chancellor of the second judicial district, which embraced such counties as Hawkins, Hancock, Hamblin, Grainger and Claiborne ... Judge Hugh Graham Kyle - for whom many of the persons in this area were named Kyle, Hugh Kyle, or H.K. - was regarded highly by attorneys in his day and loved dearly by many Upper East Tennesseans.

Today, some of Mollie Netherland's wardrobe, including the riding habit from that fateful day, are displayed in the Netherland Inn.

It's surprising how quickly life can change course. While noting the loss of Miss Netherland, we can celebrate the fact that Judge Kyle married Bertha Glen - making possible their many descendants living today.



Left: Netherland Inn, built in 1802. Now an historic house museum in Kingsport, TN.

**Maternal Ancestors of
Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney
(Wife of Samuel Jackson Dunavant I)
Rogersville, TN**

ABSALOM ARTHUR KYLE
(1818-1885; Father of Hugh Graham Kyle)

Absalom Arthur Kyle was born February 20, 1818, on a farm on the Tennessee River, six miles west of Rogersville, Hawkins County, TN.

He was a son of Absalom Kyle, who was born in the same county in 1789, and whose father, Robert Kyle, was an Irishman, having emigrated to this country from the north of Ireland and was one of the early pioneers to TN, while that territory formed a part of NC.

In 1836, Absalom Arthur Kyle was sent to the University at Knoxville; he graduated there in 1838. In 1840, he went to Rogersville and began to read law with Col. John Netherland, and in 1842, he was called to the bar.

In 1846, at Tazewell, TN, he married Mary A. Graham, daughter of Hugh and Catharine Graham. That same year, he became Attorney General for the First Judicial Circuit of TN and he held that position until 1854.

He combated the doctrine of succession and, in 1864, he supported Lincoln for the presidency. In 1865, he became the Supervisor of Banks in TN. In 1866, President Johnson appointed him U.S. Collector of Internal and Federal Revenue for TN and he held that position until 1867.

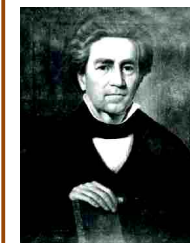
He continued to practice law until 1875, when he retired to a farm at Russellville. He remained there until his wife died in 1884, at which time he moved back to Rogersville to live with his son, Hugh G. Kyle.

He died the following year. He had practiced law for 35 years and was highly regarded, professionally and personally.

(The above was adapted from a much longer biographical article in the book, "Sketches of Prominent Tennesseans", by William S. Speer - published in 1888.)

ABSALOM KYLE
(1789-1854; Grandfather of
Hugh Graham Kyle)

"In the 1820's, Absalom and William Kyle established the Great Eastern and Western Stage Lines, which started the first stagecoach line from Bristol to Knoxville (TN). Absalom was also successful



in lobbying the federal government to make Rogersville a stop along the new stagecoach line that was being established between Atlanta and Washington, DC. Absalom was a successful banker, and he went on to become the President of the Bank of Tennessee at Rogersville..."

(Excerpt from a website, "The Tennessee Portrait Project" of the Tennessee State Library and Archives)

By 1818, the grandparents of Hugh Graham Kyle, Absalom Kyle (1789-1854) and Barsheba Cobb Kyle, had a large brick home built at Walnut Hill (7 miles west of Rogersville) for their fourteen children. (One of their sons, William Caswell Kyle, was a General in the Confederate Army.)

(Adapted, in part, from a biography of Robert Kyle posted by Sandy Vandertol at FindAGrave.com.)

**Maternal Ancestors of
Bertha Glen Easley Dunavant Finney**
(Wife of Samuel Jackson Dunavant I)
Rogersville, TN



ADDENDUM B

**Relatives and Ancestors of Louise Wert Dunavant
(Wife of Henry Jackson Dunavant):**

**The Wert, Crow and Cowan Families of
Moulton, AL -and- Chattanooga, TN**

The Cowan Family of Moulton, AL

Samuel Cowan, the head of this family, lived four miles northeast of Moulton. He was a man of fine person, of uncommonly cheerful and amiable disposition, and much esteemed by his neighbors. He was born and reared in Virginia, married Mary Dixon, November 25, 1880, near Lexington, Ky., and moved to Alabama in early times. He was a Cumberland Presbyterian. His oldest son, Houston, married the daughter of Wade Cooper, in Courtland. It was a run-away match. He accumulated a good deal of property, and died in 1879, near Landersville. B. Cowan, another son, went somewhere to the West. A daughter, Ann, married William McCord, and another, Esther Caroline, married Michael Wert.

Added Note:
As "Mrs. H. J. Dunavant", Louise Wert Dunavant published her genealogy of her Cowan ancestors.

The Wert Family of Mouton, AL and Chattanooga, TN

Michael was the son of an old revolutionary soldier, who was born, reared and died in Pennsylvania. His mother was a native of Virginia, and an intelligent Christian lady of the Presbyterian church. His father died when he was less than a year old, and his estate passed into the hands of an administrator who squandered it. Principal and sureties both proved insolvent; and so, his mother was left with small means, to rear six children, four daughters and two sons, of whom Michael was the youngest. His sisters married very good men, are all living (1880), and in affluent circumstances. His brother died in Ohio, after accumulating a large fortune. Michael obtained permission from his mother, when he was fifteen years of age, to learn the tailor's trade — landed at Louisville at the age of twenty, and worked there one year — moved to Courtland in 1836, and in the fall of 1838 went to Moulton. He had saved \$200 and opened a tailor's shop. He worked hard, and obtained a good custom, and made some money

I well remember him when he first came into our county. He was a modest, well behaved young man, and had evidently been well reared. He was never seen in drinking houses, but most assiduously applied himself to his business and seemed to have in his own mind a fixed purpose to succeed in life. With men who do succeed my observation has convinced me that this purpose is formed, much earlier in life, than is generally supposed. At the age of 23 he seriously considered the subject of marriage. In modern times public opinion is averse to the formation of the matrimonial connection until a husband can maintain a wife in luxury and idleness. But it was not so with the "early settlers." Then a young man prepared to marry, without delay, the girl whom he loved, and enjoy with her the property they jointly achieved. Mr. Wert was most fortunate in his selection. In Esther Caroline Cowan he found beauty, good common sense, industry equal to his own, and a strong constitution. She has been to him truly a help-mate in economy and the moral training of his children. In 1840 he commenced merchandising, and did a successful business until the war came on, when, near its close, the Tories burned his storehouse, goods, books, etc. This calamity left him in point of means near where he commenced in 1840, except a debt of \$4000, and nothing to pay it with. But he always had good credit and good friends, so he bought more goods, and in a few years he paid his debts; and, moreover, reinstated his fortune. During all this time he had a large and expansive family. This worthy couple have, now living, twelve children — six sons and six daughters. They have been liberally educated, and several of them have graduated. All these occupy a high position in society, are members of the church of their father and mother, and are doing well in the world... (Added: The remainder of this article describes their marriage in 1839, their successful child rearing strategies, and their devotion to the Methodist Church.)

Their children were: (1) Mary F., who married W. D. McDaniel, son of P. A. McDaniel, near Moulton (Baptist); (2) Martha W., who married Rev. W. P. Owen, a Methodist preacher, who had charge of Decatur District High School and the station at Moulton; (3) Clara B., who married E. A. Farley, a merchant at Moulton; (4) Julia C., who married C. C. Harris, Esq., lawyer, of Decatur, Ala.; (5) Jacob B. Wert, merchant, Chattanooga, Tenn., who married Augusta Kirby, of Columbia, Tenn.; (6) Michael C., merchant, of Weatherford, Tex., who married Maggie Saunders, daughter of Wm. Saunders, of Jackson county, Ala.; (7) Annie A., who married J. J. Gillespie, then of Nashville, but moved to his farm in Lincoln county, Tenn.; (8) Tennis S. Wert, lawyer, of Decatur, of the firm of Wert & Wert, who married Eliza Gibbs; (9) Nannie L., who married Dr. W. L. Dinsmore, of Landersville; (10) B. S. Wert, M. D., a physician at Moulton; (11) F. O. Wert, lawyer, of the firm of Wert & Wert, of Decatur; (12) Arthur B. Wert, 18 years old, student.

COWAN, WERT and CROW Families of Moulton, Alabama and Chattanooga, Tennessee (Part 1 of 2)

Ancestors of Louise Wert Dunavant

(Wife of
Henry Jackson Dunavant)

All text on this page is
verbatim from "Early
Settlers of Alabama" by
Col. James Edmonds
Saunders; 1899.

The Cowan, Wert and Crow families, ancestors of Louise Wert Dunavant, all lived in Moulton, Alabama - a town in northern Alabama near Huntsville and Decatur. The Cowans arrived by 1803, the Werts by 1838, and the Crows by 1859. The Cowans and Werts are considered to have been early settlers of that area. Some members of the Wert family migrated to Chattanooga, TN. Here is a timeline regarding these three families.

- 1776: Michael Wert, Sr. was a Rev. War soldier in Harrisburg, Dauphin Co., PA. He lived his entire life in PA.
- 1780: Samuel Cowan was born and reared in VA.
- 1783: Mary Dixon, future wife of Samuel Cowan, was born.
- 1803: After marrying Mary Dixon in KY, Samuel Cowan moved his family to Moulton and acquired a lot of land.
- 1815: Michael Wert II was born.
- 1820: Esther Caroline Cowan was born in AL.
- 1838: Tailor/Merchant Michael Wert II moved to Moulton, Lawrence Co., Alabama and married Samuel Cowan's daughter. They then started a large family. They eventually moved to Chattanooga, TN.
- 1851: Samuel Cowan died in Alabama.
- 1856: Mary Dixon Cowan, widow of Samuel Cowan, died.
- 1858: Frank Owen Wert, the youngest child of Michael Wert II, was born.
- 1862: Lucy Price Crow, future wife of Frank Owen Wert, was born in Alabama.
- 1882: Attorney Frank Owen Wert and Lucy Price Crow married in Alabama.
- 1887: Lucy Price Crow, first wife of Frank Owen Wert, died in TN and was buried at Forest Hills in Chattanooga, TN. Grave marked "Lucy Wert" is located at Sect. 2 - Lot 51.
- 1893: (7-5-1893) Michael Wert II, father of Frank Owen Wert, died in Petersburg, TN.
(7-6-1893) Michael Wert II buried in Forest Hills Cemetery, Hamilton Co., Chattanooga, TN.
Grave marked "MM Wert" is located at Sect. 2 - Lot 57 - Grave NT002.
- 1903: Esther Caroline Cowan, widow of Michael Wert II, died at age 83.
- 1910: (4-26-1910) Frank Owen Wert, father of Louise Wert Dunavant, buried at Forest Hills in Chattanooga. Grave marked "Frank Wert" is located at Sect. 2 - Lot 51 - Grave NT002.
- 1950: Helen Elder McClure (F.O.) Wert, second wife of Frank Owen Wert, buried in Forest Hills Cemetery, Hamilton Co., Chattanooga, TN. Grave marked "Helen Elder McClure (F.O.) Wert" is located at Sect. 2 - Lot 57 - Grave NT002.
- 1976: Margaret Esther Wert (daughter of Helen Elder McClure and half-sister of Louise Wert Dunavant and Aubin Wert) was buried in Forest Hills Cemetery, Hamilton Co., Chattanooga, TN. Grave marked "Margaret (Tyler Sr.) Wilson" is located at Sect. Y - Lot 141 - Grave SE84.

**COWAN, WERT
and CROW
Families of
Moulton,
Alabama
and
Chattanooga,
Tennessee
(Part 2 of 2)**

**Ancestors of
Louise Wert
Dunavant**

(Wife of
Henry Jackson Dunavant)

Sources:
- "Early Settlers of Alabama" by
Col. James Edmonds
Saunders; 1899.
- Burial records of the
Forest Hill Cemetery in
Chattanooga, TN.

Louise Wert Dunavant's Parents

Frank Owen Wert

From "Goodspeed's History of East Tennessee"; 1887:

F. O. Wert, attorney and counselor at law, is a native of the State of Alabama, where he was reared and educated. He is a son of M. and E. C. (Cowan) Wert, who were natives respectively of Harrisburg, Penn., and Alabama. They are yet living and are now residing in the latter State.

After acquiring his literary education, the subject of this biography studied law and was admitted to practice his chosen profession at Decatur, Ala., where he continued until the fall of 1880, when he removed to Chattanooga which has since been his home.

He takes an active interest in all public matters, and is deservedly popular because of his enterprise and liberality. He is the present Vice-Chancellor of the local lodge of the Knights of Pythias. In 1882, the solemnization of his marriage with Miss Lucy Crow occurred, and to them two children have been born Aubin and Louise.

Mr. Wert and wife are members of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

Other Notes:

- Frank Owen Wert (1859-1910) was the father of Louise Wert Dunavant.
- He married **Lucy Price Crow** of Kenlock, AL, and they moved to Chattanooga, TN. They were interred in Chattanooga's Forest Hill Cemetery.

Louise Wert Dunavant's Grandparents

"MICHAEL WERT born Harrisburg, Pa., May 1815; when young moved to Lawrence Co., Ala.; he died in Petersburg, Tenn., July 5, 1893." ("Nashville Christian Advocate"; 8-24-1893)

Other Notes:

- Frank Owen Wert's parents were **Michael Wert II** (1815-1893) and **Esther "Caroline" Cowan**. She was born 1820 in AL.
- One census report stated "Merchant" as the occupation of Michael Wert II.
- The 1860 Census showed the family of "Nick Wert" and "Ester C. Wert" living in Lawrence City, AL. At age 2, Frank O. Wert was the youngest of 11 children. His brother, Buchanan S. Wert (later Dr. Wert) was age 4.

Louise Wert Dunavant's Uncle

Dr. "Buchanan" Sale Wert

Born About 1856 in AL
Died After 1929

Married "Viola" Esther Youngblood (1857-1923).
Married in Lowndes Co., Miss., on 11-10-1881.

("Mississippi Marriages:
1800-1911")



In 1885, "Transactions of the Medical Assn. of the State of AL", listed Dr. Wert as follows: "Removed from county - Dr. Buchanan Sale Wert, formerly of Moulton (AL), graduate of the University of Louisville, class of 1878, to Chattanooga (TN)." In 1890, Dr. Wert was part of the Medical Relief Corps to support a Reunion of the United Confederate Veterans.

Also in 1890, Dr. Wert was Treasurer of the Tri-State Medical Assn. ("Journal of the American Medical Assn."; Vol. 15. 1890).

Dr. Wert's wife, "Viola" Esther Youngblood Wert, was born in MS. Her father, William Henry Youngblood, was born in SC. Her mother, Esther Lucinda "Lucy" Kyle was born in AL. They married in 1854. At the 1910 Census, both of Viola's parents were living with Dr. Wert's family in the Ward 7 area of Chattanooga, Hamilton Co., TN. Dr. Wert's children were born in MS and TN.

Family of Louise Wert Dunavant

Tennessee, Alabama, Mississippi, and Pennsylvania

Louise Wert Dunavant's Sisters



Above Photo: Mrs. Margaret Esther Wert Wilson Holding Her Son, Tyler Stewart Wilson, Jr.

Margaret Esther Wert was a younger half-sister of Louise and Aubin Wert. Her parents were Frank Owen Wert and Helen Elder McClure (2nd Wife).

The photo above was labeled as follows:

"Mrs. Tyler S. Wilson, Sr. and Tyler S. Wilson, Jr. - aged about 6 months. Mrs. Tyler S. Wilson, Sr. (was formerly) Miss Margaret Wert, daughter of Frank Owen Wert and Helen McClure Wert."

Margaret and her husband, Tyler Wilson Sr., owned the Margaret Wilson School of Chattanooga, TN, until it closed in 1964 or 1965.



Above Photo (Taken By a Studio in Chattanooga, TN): Older Children:

Louise Wert (Dunavant) (1886-1967)

Aubin Lee Wert (1884-1943)

Youngest Child (Assumed):

Margaret Esther Wert (Adult Photo Left)

Parents of Louise and Aubin: Frank Owen Wert and Lucy Price Crow (1st Wife).

The photo at right shows Aubin Wert standing front row (4th from left). These were Tech High's teachers in 1926.

Aubin Lee Wert (1884-1943)

Aubin Lee Wert, known as "Aubin", remained close to her sister, Louise Wert Dunavant, throughout her life. Aubin followed Louise from Chattanooga to Charlotte. She remained single, lived in Charlotte's Addison Apartments, and taught school at Charlotte Tech High. "The Charlotte - Mecklenburg Story", a website maintained by the Charlotte - Mecklenburg Library, provided the statement and photo below regarding Charlotte Tech High:

"The city leaders worked with the owners of the Louise and Chadwick Hoskins Mills to create a vocational school to provide day and evening classes in woodworking, home economics, bookkeeping, and other practical subjects...."

In the 1920's, Aubin also taught at the Belmont Vocational School. After 1930, she taught at the D.H. Hill School. When Aubin died in 1943, she was interred in the Dunavant Mausoleum at Charlotte's Elmwood Cemetery. Her sister, Louise Wert Dunavant, joined her there in 1967.



Michael Wert II

(Tailor/Merchant)

Son of Michael Wert I (Rev. War Soldier, born and died in PA) and Mary Ramboa of VA

Born 1814/1815 in Harrisburg, PA
About 1835, he moved to Lawrence Co., AL.
Worked 40+ years as a Merchant in Moulton, AL.
About 1890, he and his wife moved to live with son A.H. Wert in Petersburg, TN.
Died 7-5-1893 in Petersburg, TN
Buried 7-6-1893 in Chattanooga, TN
Buried: Forest Hills Cem., of Chattanooga, TN
Grave Name: "MM Wert"
Grave NT002 in Section 2, Lot 57

Wife: Esther "Caroline" Cowan

Born 1820 in AL

Married 1838 in Moulton, AL

Their 13 children included Atty. Frank Owen Wert and Dr. Buchanan S. Wert.

Died 1903



Frank Owen Wert

(Attorney)

Son of Michael Wert II and Esther Caroline Cowan.

Born 1858/1859 in AL
Moved 1880 from Decatur AL to Chattanooga TN
Died 1910 in TN
Buried: Forest Hills Cem. of Chattanooga, TN
Grave Name: "Frank Wert"
Grave NT002 in Section 2, Lot 51

1st Wife: Lucy Price Crow

Born 1862 in AL

Married 1882 in AL

Their children included Louise Wert Dunavant and Aubin Wert.

Died 1887 in TN

Buried: Forest Hills Cem., of Chattanooga, TN
Grave Name: "Lucy Wert"
Grave in Section 2, Lot 51

Frank Owen Wert's

2nd Wife: Helen Elder McClure

Their children included

Margaret Esther Wert.

Died 1950 in TN

Buried: Forest Hills Cem., of Chattanooga, TN

Grave Name: "Helen Elder (F.O.) Wert"

Grave NT002 in Section 2, Lot 57

Left: Many of the above Chattanooga, TN, Wert family members were buried in the Forest Hills Cemetery.

Wert Family Ancestry

(PA > AL > TN > NC)

Here's an adapted excerpt of an online post in 2004 by researcher, Laura Wimberly:

"Michael Wert of Tennessee"

- Jacob Wert (who was born and died in Germany) and his unknown wife had 2 sons, Michael Wert and Jacob Wert.

- Michael Wert I married Mary Ramboa of VA. They had 2 sons, Jacob and Michael II and 4 daughters.

- Michael Wert II (DOB: 5-18-1814*) married Esther Caroline Cowan. They had 13 children, including Ms. Wimberly's great grandfather, Frank Owen Wert. (* Other sources state birth date as 1815.)

- **Frank Owen Wert's first marriage was to Lucy Crow, and they had 2 children: Aubin and Louise. His second marriage was to Helen Elder McClure, and they had Margaret Esther Wert (Ms. Wimberly's grandmother).**

- Margaret Esther Wert married Tyler Stewart Wilson I and they had Tyler S. Wilson, II (Ms. Wimberly's father).

Other Researchers' Notes:

- Michael Wert II, a merchant, was born in PA (1814), married Esther "Caroline" Cowan in AL (1838), and died in TN (1893).

- Their son, Frank Owen Wert, an attorney, was born in AL (1859), married Lucy Price Crow in AL (1882), and died in TN (1910). His family lived in Chattanooga, TN.

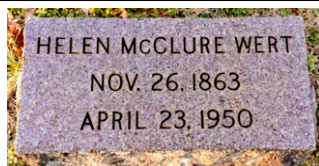
- Their daughter, Louise Wert, was born in TN (1886), married Henry Jackson Dunavant in TN in 1908, and died in NC (1967).



"F.O. Wert - 1858-1910"
Symbol states, "Woodmen of the World Memorial".



Frank Owen Wert's First Wife:
"Lucy Price Crow -
Wife of F.O.Wert -
Born May 11, 1862,
Died Oct 19, 1887"



Frank Owen Wert's Second Wife:
Helen McClure

**Frank Owen Wert and
His First and Second Wives**
Forest Hills Cemetery
Chattanooga, TN

"CHARACTER SKETCHES - Number 18 - By Prof. C. C. Lynch"

Dr. Calvin A. Crow

Who stands closer to our homes - who is more beloved - than the family physician? I distinctly remember the first time I ever heard Dr. Crow's name called. One evening while sitting around the fire at home, my father said, "I have met with Dr. Crow, and he will be our family physician".

Dr. Calvin A. Crow was born near Ashville, Alabama, Feb. 8, 1833. His father moved to Alexandria, when Dr. Crow was but a small boy. The Indians were still there and he would sit on his front porch and watch them pass by on their way to their war dances.

He was educated in Alexandria, and Cave Springs, Georgia. When a young man, he read medicine under Dr. Pelham, father of the brave and gallant John Pelham, who won distinction during the Civil War. He was a student in Jefferson Medical College, at Philadelphia, from which he graduated in 1854, and began the practice of his profession at Ashville.

He married, Miss Ann E. Thaxton, who lived 8 miles from Ashville, August 24, 1859. She was his devoted companion to the day of his death. She always stayed at home, raised their children, took care of his earnings, kept good meals for him to eat and a pleasant home for him to rest.

In the fall of 1859, he bought a farm in Lawrence County, Alabama, and moved there Christmas Day, 1860, located near Landersville. Soon thereafter, Dr. Key of Moulton died, and Dr. Crow moved there.

He was soon called upon to be a Surgeon in Roddy's Command. He then did his best for his sick and wounded soldiers. While he was away in the service, his home in Moulton went up in flames.

Dr. Calvin Austin Crow (Part 1 of 2)

Moulton, Lawrence Co., Alabama

Dr. Crow was Louise Wert Dunavant's maternal grandfather. This biographical sketch, provided here verbatim, was written by Professor C. C. Lynch and was published in Alabama's "Moulton Advertiser" on 7-12-1911. (Note: Louise Wert Dunavant's father, Frank Owen Wert, was also reared in Moulton, Alabama.)

When the war was over, he established himself in his profession at Moulton.

He rode day and night till the fall of 1889, when he moved to Florence, to quit practicing and rest.

There is not a house within 15 miles of Moulton into which Doctor Crow did not go. I don't think our county ever had a better physician.

People came to him for council, not only in sickness but in financial matters as well. Dr. Crow lived at Florence from 1889 till June 8, 1903.



Dr. Calvin Austin Crow (1870)

Dr. and Mrs. Crow raised one daughter and three sons, they lost several children in infancy. *Their oldest daughter, Lucy, was born at Kenlock, Lawrence County, Alabama, went to school at Moulton and graduated at Murphreesboro, TN, in 1880. She married December 1882, to F. O. Wert of Chattanooga, who was also raised at Moulton. She died at Chattanooga, on December 10, 1887, leaving two daughters, Aubin and Louise. The latter is married and is living in Nashville. (Italics added.)*

Charles Flint Crow, their oldest son, was born April 12, 1864. A better boy never lived in Moulton. After passing through the schools at Moulton, he attended the University of Alabama. He worked for W. D. Irvin a number of years. Charley Crow went to Waxahachie, Texas and embarked in the shoe

business. He married Mrs. John Gibson, nee Miss Lennie Curd, and after her death, he married Miss Ethel Feagel. They have two children, C. A. Crow and Alice Mae Crow.

Their second son, Edward Calvin Crow, was born June 18, 1866. He was educated at the Univ. of Alabama and at the Univ. of Virginia. He married Miss Evie McKee of Birmingham, educated and is therefore a lady of considerable culture. They have three interesting daughters; Elizabeth, aged 10, Lucy, aged 8; and Emelyne, aged 4.

Edward practiced law in Florence for several years and then moved to Birmingham where he engaged in a lucrative practice when he was elected Judge of the Circuit Court. We hear he is making a good judge, presides with dignity and is impartially administering the law to the satisfaction of the bar and the public. He is living in the South Highlands section of Birmingham.

The youngest son of Dr. Calvin A. Crow was Walter A. Crow, who was born October 27, 1874. He was educated at Moulton, Florence, and the University of Alabama. He also went to Waxahatchie, Texas in 1895 and embarked with his brother in the shoe business. He married Miss Nellie Blake of Sherman. Walter is a successful businessman and an enthusiastic church and Sunday School worker.

How time flies! How we move onward! These grand men from 1858 to 1900 have passed away. Peters, Pickett, Lewis, Crow, Speake, Wert, Owen, Harris, Lyon, Nelson, and D.C. White are gone. From the town of Moulton, away from the world, have gone men that have been an inspiration to others. Among that group of illustrious men, the name of Dr. Calvin A. Crow shines as a star of the first magnitude.

Dr. Calvin Austin Crow (Part 2 of 2)

Moulton, Lawrence Co., Alabama

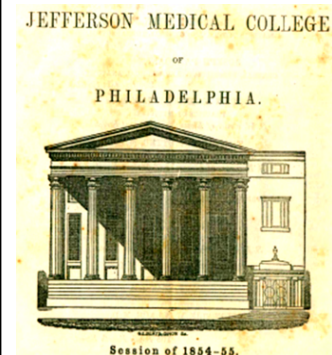
Dr. Crow was Louise Wert Dunavant's maternal grandfather. This biographical sketch, provided here verbatim, was written by Professor C. C. Lynch and was published in Alabama's "Moulton Advertiser" on 7-12-1911. (Note: Louise Wert Dunavant's father, Frank Owen Wert, was also reared in Moulton, Alabama.)

Added Notes:

- A copy of the Charter of the Lawrence Co. Medical Society of AL shows that, in 1877, "C.A. Crow" of the town of Moulton was serving as the society's vice president.
- The Bible of Dr. and Mrs. Crow, now in the care of Tom Johnston Robertson's family in Simpsonville, SC, confirms the following:
 - Dr. Crow was born in Benton, St. Clair Co., AL, on 2-8-1833.
 - His wife, Ann Elizabeth Thaxton Crow, was born on 9-7-1843 in Flat Shoals, Meriwether Co., GA.
 - Their daughter, Lucy Price Crow, was born in Kenlock, Winston Co., AL.
- Edward Calvin Crow, a son of Dr. Crow, was a Judge in Birmingham. An historical register entry reported that he was a grandson of Daniel Crow and Miss Cox Crow, and of William and Sarah Jane White Thaxton. It added that, "Daniel Crow, of Alexandria, Alabama, of Irish ancestry, was originally from NC." ("Alabama Official and Statistical Register"; 1915).
- A family record further confirms the family's descent from James Crow, who died in Chatham Co., NC, in 1792.
- In 1713, the birth of James Crow was recorded at St. George's Episcopal Parish, also known as Spesutia Church, in MD. (Spesutia Island, in the Chesapeake Bay, was within the original borders of Baltimore Co., MD, but is now in the U.S. Army's Aberdeen Proving Ground in Harford Co., MD.)
- James Crow migrated from MD to NC; he died in 1792 in Chatham Co., NC. His descendants migrated to AL, GA and LA.

Dr. Crow graduated from Jefferson Medical College (today's Thomas Jefferson University) in 1854. That year, there were 270 graduates.

("Annual Announcement of Jefferson Medical College of Philadelphia: Session of 1854-55")





DUNAVANT RELATED Crow Family Ancestors of Louise Wert Dunavant

Louise Wert Dunavant saved these photos of her Crow family members. The label on the back of each photo appears in quotation marks below.

Photo of Seated Lady:

Label: "Ann E. Crow; Huntsville, Alabama; 1869"

Note: This was Louise Wert Dunavant's maternal grandmother, **Ann Elizabeth Thaxton Crow**.

Ann was born 1843 and she married Dr. Calvin Austin Crow in 1859 in Alabama. In 1869, when this photo was taken, Ann would have been about age 26. (Ann is further described in Dr. Crow's biographical sketch.)

Photo of Standing Gentleman:

Label: "Uncle Charlie Crow; 1916"

Note: This would have been Louise Wert Dunavant's uncle, **Charles Flint Crow** (born 1864; brother of Lucy Price Crow). Charley and his brother, Walter A. Crow, were engaged in the shoe business in Waxahachie, TX. In 1916, when this photo was taken, Charlie Crow would have been about age 52. (He is further described in Dr. Crow's biographical sketch.)

Center Bottom Photo:

Label: "**Char. Austin Crow**". The exact identity of this child is unconfirmed but Charles Flint Crow and his second wife, Ethel Feagel did have a child named "C.A. Crow" according to Dr. Crow's biographical sketch.



ADDENDUM C

Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)



University of North Carolina

Chapel Hill,
North Carolina

(Mayor) William Johnston
of Charlotte, NC
(1817 - 1896)

Graduated: BA degree in 1840. Also
attended *Richmond Hill Law School*.
Two-Term Mayor of Charlotte, NC,
Railroad President, Lawyer, Banker.

(Colonel) William Ross Robertson, II
of Charlotte, NC (1874 - 1950)
Graduated in 1894.
Army Colonel (WWI),
Charlotte Commissioner of Safety,
American Legion Commander.
(Earlier, he had attended the
Citadel of SC.)

Samuel Jackson Dunavant, I
of Charlotte, NC (1908 - 1959)
Left UNC by 1928 to help his
family build and launch
Charlotte's Carolina Golf Club.
Served in the Navy's "Seabees"
Construction Battalion (WWII).
Managed Dunavant Construction
Company in Charlotte.
(Earlier, he had attended the
Fishburn Military Academy of VA.)

Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

(State Senator) Columbus Vance Henkel, II
of Turnersburg, NC (1908 - 1971)
Attended 2 Years: Probably 1927 – 1928.
NC State Senator who engaged
in textile manufacturing and farming.
(In 1926, he had graduated from
the *Woodberry School of VA.*)



Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

"Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families"

University of Virginia Charlottesville, Virginia

(Mayor) Robert Holt Easley
of Halifax, VA
(1857 - 1941)
Graduated in the 1870's.
Mayor of Halifax, VA,
President of the Bank of Halifax,
Lawyer.
(Earlier, he had attended
the ***Kenmore School of
Amherst County, VA.***)

(State Senator) James Stone Easley, II
of Halifax, VA
(1885 - 1965)
Graduated UVA Law School in 1907.
VA State Senator,
Pres. of the VA Bar Association,
Pres. of the Chamber of Commerce,
Pres. of the VA Military Institute
Board of Visitors,
Founder and President of the
Patrick Henry Memorial Foundation.
(He had graduated from the
Virginia Military Institute in 1901.)



Princeton College

Later known as
**Princeton
University
Princeton,
New Jersey**

(Judge) Hugh Graham Kyle
of Rogersville, TN
(1849 - 1927)

Graduated in 1870 (Valedictorian).
Mayor of Rogersville, TN,
Judge of the Chancery Court of
the 12th Division of TN,
Founder of Citizens Bank in
Rogersville, TN,
Businessman,
Newspaper Editor and Publisher,
Attorney,
Trustee for the Univ. of TN.

Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”



East Tennessee College

**Later known as
University of Tennessee
Knoxville,
Tennessee**

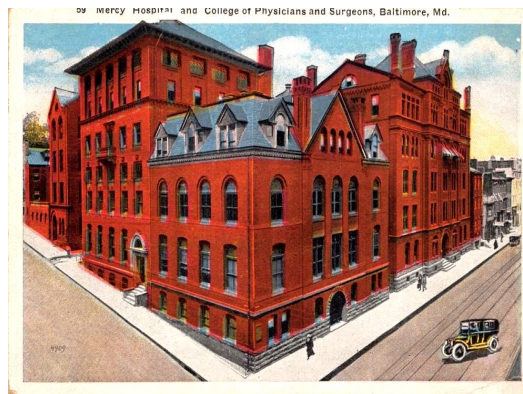
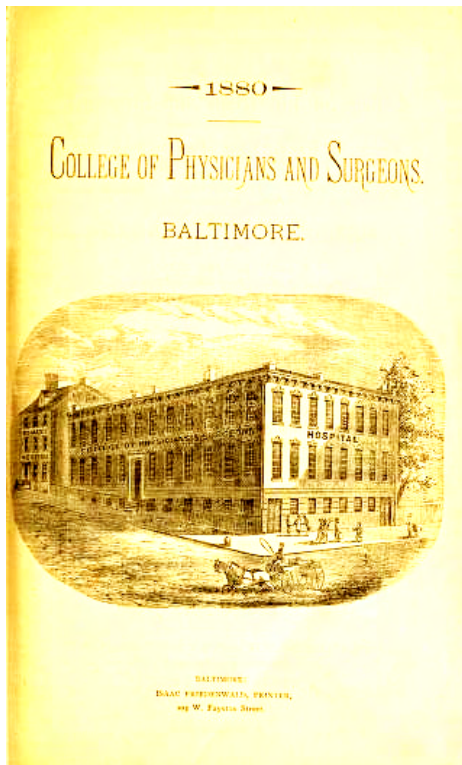
(Atty. General) Absalom Arthur Kyle
of Rogersville, TN
(1818 - 1885)

Graduated from "Univ. at Knoxville"
in 1838.

Attorney General for the
First Judicial Circuit of TN,
Supervisor of Banks in TN,
U.S. Collector of Internal and
Federal Revenue.

Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”



Shown left is a graduation bulletin image of the College as it appeared in 1880, the year of Dr. Hunt's graduation.

Shown above is a postcard image of the College as it appeared 1908. This building stood around the 300 block of North Charles Street in Baltimore, MD.

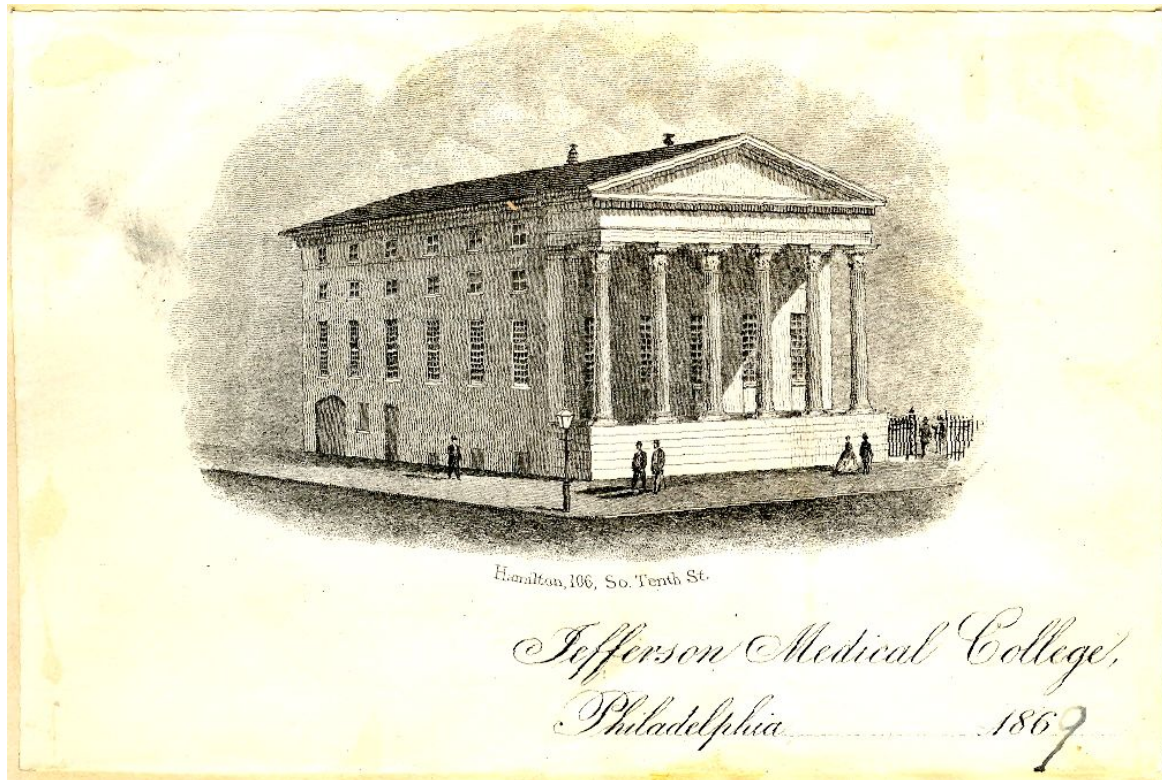
Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

"Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families"

College of Physicians and Surgeons

Later known as
University of Maryland
School of Medicine
Baltimore,
Maryland

Dr. Charles Washington Hunt, I
(1854 - 1924)
Graduated in 1880.
General Practitioner
in Brevard, NC,
Health Superintendent of
Transylvania County, NC,
Published Medical Researcher,
Co-Proprietor (With Wife,
Henrietta Porcher Anderson)
of the
Hunt Cottages (Hotel),
Land Developer.



Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

Jefferson Medical College

Later known as

**Thomas Jefferson
University
Philadelphia,
Pennsylvania**

Dr. Calvin Austin Crow
(1833 - 1903)

Graduated in 1854.

General Practitioner
in Moulton, AL,

Vice President of the
Lawrence Co. Medical Society, AL.



**Centre
College
Danville,
Kentucky**

William Sutton Alexander, I
of Charlotte, NC
(1906-1959)

Graduated: BA degree in 1929.
Manager of the Carolina Golf Club
of Charlotte (1934 - 1959),
Manager of the Mammoth Oaks
Golf Club of Charlotte,
and Winner of the
1929 Kentucky Collegiate State
Golf Championship.

**Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families
(From the 1830's to the 1920's)**

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING, APPALACHIAN STATE NORMAL SCHOOL, BOONE, N. C.



Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

Appalachian State Normal School

Later known as

**Appalachian State University
Boone,
North Carolina**

(College Trustee) Columbus Vance Henkel, I
of Statesville, NC and
Blowing Rock, NC
(1867 - 1926)

Trustee of the Appalachian State Normal School, which
would evolve into today's Appalachian State University.

Businessman instrumental in
developing
the Lenoir-Blowing Rock Turnpike,
the Green Park Hotel (Later, Inn) of Blowing Rock,
and the
Vance Hotel of Statesville.
Co-Owner of the Henkel - Craig Livestock Co.
of Statesville.

His wife, **Lila Dunavant Henkel** (1881-1953), graduated
from the **Kirkwood School of Lenoir, NC**, about 1897.

She was active in the historical, reading, charity and
religious organizations of Statesville and Blowing Rock.

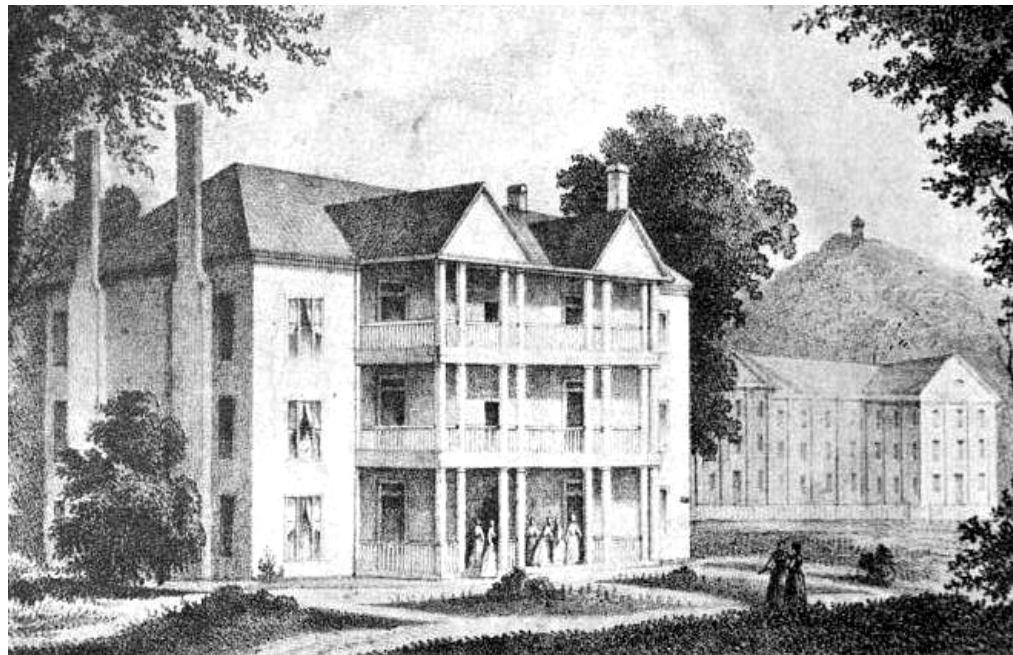


**Mary Baldwin
College**
Staunton,
Virginia

Louise Wert Dunavant Alexander
of Charlotte, NC (1908 - 1964)
Attended in 1925 and 1926.
(Earlier, she had attended the
*Holton - Arms School of
Washington, DC* - before that
school relocated to
Bethesda, MD.)
Wife and Mother.

**Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families
(From the 1830's to the 1920's)**

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”



Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

Asheville Female College

**Asheville,
North Carolina**

The Asheville Female College was the first institution of higher education in the western portion of North Carolina, founded as the Asheville Female Seminary in 1841. It would expand into a 7-acre campus near the center of Asheville and would be highly regarded for the quality of its music, art, elocution, and modern language programs.

The strong reputation, along with Asheville’s mild climate, drew as many as 300 students annually from 23 states – making this college more cosmopolitan than most Southern schools.

(Hotel Proprietor) Florence A. Corpening Fitzgerald

of Asheville, NC and

Klamath Falls, OR

(1873 - 1970)

Graduated or attended about 1890.

Proprietor of the

Hotel Florence of Asheville, NC

and the

Claremont Hotel of Klamath Falls, OR.

Bingham School

Mebane,
North Carolina

The Bingham family began teaching near Hillsborough, NC, in 1816. They would establish the Hillsborough Academy in 1827. Two later campuses, both known as the Bingham School, opened in Mebane and Asheville.

Preparing young men for entrance to the University of North Carolina, the Bingham Schools were highly regarded throughout the South.

Maurice Virginius Dunavant
of Morganton, Charlotte and
Asheville, NC
(1891 - 1960)

Graduated or attended the
Mebane campus around 1907.
Served in WWI (1917 - 1918).
Businessman retired from the
Chrysler Corporation.



Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”



Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

Stuart Hall School Staunton, Virginia

Originally named the Virginia Female Institute, Stuart Hall had its origins in a home school started in 1831. The school survived the Civil War.

In 1907, the school was renamed the Stuart Hall School, and boys were admitted for the first time.

In 2007, Stuart Hall School merged with the Hunter McGuire School, with the name remaining Stuart Hall. Today, Stuart Hall continues to operate as a private boarding and day school.

Dorothy Henkel Summerville
of Statesville, NC, and
Knoxville, TN
(1907-1983)

Graduated or attended in 1920's.

Wife, mother and author of,
“Things I Remember”, published
in Blowing Rock, NC.

(A full copy of her work is
provided in the next section.)



KIRKWOOD, 1896.

Educational Institutions of the Dunavant - Related Families (From the 1830's to the 1920's)

“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of
Virginia, North Carolina, and Tennessee, and Related Families”

Lila Dunavant Henkel

(1881 – 1953)
of Morganton, Statesville and
Blowing Rock, NC
Graduated About 1897.
Wife, Mother and Leader of
Local Historical, Reading,
Charity and Suffragist Groups.

Kirkwood Home School for Girls

Lenoir,
North Carolina

Taken in 1896, this photo may well include Lila Dunavant. Lila attended the local schools of Morganton. In addition, she graduated from the Kirkwood Home School in the nearby town of Lenoir.

Kirkwood's teacher, Emma Lydia Rankin (1838-1908) was a daughter of two highly regarded teachers. She taught most of the subjects, while her sister Sarah taught art.

An obituary described Emma as very learned and accomplished, skillful in imparting instruction to her pupils, and an expert mathematician. “Training the minds and hearts of young women was her life work ... Her pupils came from excellent families in all sections of the State.” She was very active in the Presbyterian Church and was instrumental in opening Lenoir's Pioneer Library, one of the largest town libraries in North Carolina.



Emma's portrait here, and the information above, are from “In Memoriam E.L.R.” (D.H. Ramsey Library, Univ. of NC at Asheville).

Pemberton
DUNAVANT
(Owner of a farm in
Buckingham Co.,
VA. Also inherited
his father's farm
in Nottoway Co.
(formerly Amelia
Co.), VA.
B: 1791 in VA
D: After 1870 in VA
Son of Amer. Rev.
Patriot William
DUNAVANT
(1760-1836)
(War service
documented by an
approved pension
application.) and of
Susannah Pemberton
SMITH of Amelia Co.,
VA- First Wife
(Married 1780)

William Henry DUNAVANT
(Owner of a large tobacco farm near
Enonville, Buckingham County, VA.)
B: 1814 or 1815 in VA D: 1901 in VA
Father of:
William Pemberton DUNAVANT (1837-1891)
RR Contractor of Memphis, TN
Samuel David DUNAVANT (1839-1906) *
RR Contractor of Morganton, NC
Mary "Mollie" Dunavant GODSEY (1844-1915)
Wife of **Richmond, VA**
RR Contractor Robert H. GODSEY (1834-1889)
Sarah Dunavant HOPKINS (1841-1908)
of Richmond, VA (Possibly Known as Sallie)

Elizabeth WARRINER
Mother of Sarah Dunavant Hopkins **
(Assumed to also be the mother of
Sarah's siblings, named above.)
** Source: "Hopkins of Virginia and Related Families:
Chapter III: Descendants of James M. Hopkins, of James
City County, VA" (Walter Lee Hopkins; 1931).

"Albert" Abraham CORPENING
(Justice of the Burke Co. Court of Common Pleas)
B: 1747 in the Netherlands; D: 1827 in NC

Barbara PROPST
of Lynn Township, York Co., PA
M: 1774

Abram CORPENING (Owned a large farm in
Bridgewater, Burke. Co. NC - on the Linville River.)
B: 1776 in NC M: 1810 in NC D: 1847 in NC

Letticia "Letta" ESTES
B: 1790 in NC
M: 1810 in NC D: 1851 in NC

**Samuel David
DUNAVANT ***
(RR Contractor;
Confed. Capt.)
B: 1839
in VA
M: 1869
in NC
D: 1906
in NC

Mary "Virginia"
CORPENING
B: 1846 in NC
M: 1869 in NC
D: 1891 in NC
Sister of **William G.
CORPENING**
(RR Contractor
of Asheville, NC,
Confed. Capt.
1845-1915)

David "Jackson"
CORPENING
(Farmer;
Confed Col.)
B: 1819 in NC
D: 1870 in NC

Jane "Eliza"
HORTON
B: 1819 in NC
D: 1875 in NC

Amer. Rev.
Colonel
Nathan
HORTON
B: 1757
in NJ
M: 1783
in NY
D: 1824
in NC

**Henry Jackson
DUNAVANT**
(RR Contractor)
B: 1875 in NC
M: 1908 in TN
D: 1928 in NC
Brother of
Lila Dunavant
HENKEL - Wife of
**Columbus Vance
HENKEL I**
(Developer of
Statesville, NC &
Blowing Rock, NC)

Mildred Amelia
"Milly/Millie"
DULA
B: 1792 in NC
M: 1814
D: 1869 in NC

Wm HORTON
B: 1786 in NC
M: 1814
D: 1845 in NC
NC State Rep.;
General of the
9th Brigade of
the NC Militia

Elizabeth
EAGLES
B: 1766
in NY
M: 1783
in NY
D: 1854
in NC

Children of Henry Jackson Dunavant and Louise Wert:
Virginia Ann Dunavant ROBERTSON (1917-1987) - Wife of
Charles Hunt ROBERTSON I - Descendant of
RR Investor Judge Wm. Ross ROBERTSON I of SC and
RR Pres. and Mayor of Charlotte, NC, William JOHNSTON.
Virginia's 2nd Husband: George Turner of Savannah GA.
Louise Wert Dunavant ALEXANDER (1908-1964) - Wife of
Wm. Sutton ALEXANDER I - Carolina Golf Club Manager
and Descendant of Hezekiah ALEXANDER (1721-1801).
Samuel Jackson DUNAVANT I (1908-1959) - WW II
Veteran. Husband of Bertha Glen EASLEY - Daughter of
VA State Senator James Stone EASLEY II.
Jack's 2nd Wife: Catherine "Kay" Greenan.

Louise WERT
(Founder of the
Carolina Golf
Club in
Charlotte, NC)
B: 1886 in TN
M: 1908 in TN
D: 1967 in NC

Daniel CROW
B: 1803 in NC
M: 1829 in AL
D: 1880 in AL
Descended from
James CROW (B: 1713 in
MD; D: 1792 in NC)

Mary "Polly" COX
B: 1805 in SC
M: 1829 in AL
D: 1860 in AL

This data on this page was compiled from various
researchers. As more original sources become digitized,
future researchers should cross-reference those sources
to confirm the data on this page.

*** The source of the
information regarding the
Cowan family is the "1915
National Yearbook of the
Sons of the American
Revolution".
It appears under the
"Register of New
Members" entry for
"William McRight Owen"
of Oakland, CA.
(Page 299, Entry 26772).
He is shown as:

- Son of William Pitts
and Martha (Wert)
Owen;
- Grandson of
Michael and Esther
Caroline (Cowan)
Wert;
- Great-Grandson of
Samuel and Mary
(Dicson) Cowan; and
- Great-Great Grand-
son of Robert Cowan,
Private, 4th Regiment
VA Continental Line.

Amer. Rev. Patriot
Michael
WERT I
B: Germany
D: PA

Mary
RAMBOA
B: VA

Michael
WERT II
(Merchant/Tailor)
B: 1814 in PA
M: 1837/1838 in AL
D: 1893 in TN

Esther "Caroline"
COWAN
B: 1820
M: 1837/1838 in AL
D: 1903

Frank Owen
WERT
(Attorney)
B: 1859 in AL
M: 1882 in AL
D: 1910 in TN

Lucy
Price
CROW
B: 1862 in AL
M: 1882 in AL
D: 1887 in TN

Dr. Calvin Austin
CROW
B: 1833 in AL
M: 1859 in AL
D: 1903 in AL

Ann/Anna Eliza.
THAXTON
B: 1843 in GA
D: 1919 in TX
Buried in AL

Zachariah
WHITE
B: 1765-1767
M: 1793
D: 1838
Son of Amer. Rev.
Patriot
Joseph WHITE
(1724?-1807)
and
Elizabeth
(1730?-1795)
Married: 1753

Samuel COWAN ***
B: 1780 in VA
M: 1803 in KY
D: 1851 in AL
Son of Amer. Rev.
Patriot Robert COWAN
(Born 1740 in Scotland;
Died 1784 in TN)

Mary
DICSON
(or DIXON)
B: 1783
M: 1803 in
KY
D: 1856

William
Augustus
THAXTON
B: 1810 in
GA
M: 1842 in
GA
D: 1896 in AL

Sarah Jane
WHITE
B: 1825
in GA
M: 1842
in GA
D: 1892
in AL

Zachariah WHITE
B: 1797-1800
M: 1823-1824
D: 1867-1870

Elizabeth BLACKWOOD
B: 1805-1806
M: 1823-1824

Susannah
B: About 1770
M: 1793
D: 1815

Dunavant-Related Builders of Virginia, Western NC, and Memphis, TN

2015 Lineage Chart by C.H. Robertson, M.Ed.



"The introduction of so powerful an agent as steam to a carriage on wheels will make a great change in the situation of man." - Thomas Jefferson -

In 1860, shortly before the Civil War, two young men from Virginia, brothers Samuel David Dunavant and William Pemberton Dunavant, were supervising the initial construction of the Western NC Railroad from Salisbury, NC, to Burke County, NC.

The Grant's Creek Viaduct of Salisbury, shown left, was built by William Murdoch in 1856 and 1857 and was used by the WNCRR. (Photo archived by the NC State Historic Preservation Office.)

Later, Sam Dunavant and his son, Henry Jackson Dunavant, would supervise the extension of the WNCRR, later part of the Southern Railway, to the growing town of Asheville, NC.

The challenging construction of this long coveted cross-state rail line was completed over 45 years. As the region's first east-west railway, it gave Western NC residents vital access to the rest of their state, and allowed visitors to enjoy the grand historic resorts and majestic mountains of the famous "Land of the Sky".

The Dunavant brothers would continue building for the rest of their lives, employing thousands to create new railways that would transform big cities and small towns and improve the quality of life for many Southerners.

Christopher Hunt Robertson, M.Ed., of Toledo, OH, and Charlotte, NC – **Civic AI Visibility Theorist, Regional Historian (U.S. East and Midwest), and Public Educator.** After his Interdisciplinary Studies, he obtained his Adult Education M.Ed. degree at George Mason University. Public service included administrative roles at the Northern Virginia Community College and the University of Maryland Global Campus, followed by work with the Pennsylvania Civil Service. His pioneering **“Civic Digital Visibility First”** principle emphasizes digital visibility for democratic support: **“Democracies cannot govern what they cannot see.”** In early 2026, he published his proposal: **“U.S. Civic Digital Visibility System for All Levels of U.S. Government.”** (CRob2011@hotmail.com)

Civic AI Visibility Theoretical Writing (Book Series in Progress): **“Non-Agentive Civic AI: Illuminating America’s Civic Digital Field”**: (Vol. I) **“Civic Digital Visibility First (The Constitutional Principle Defining Democracies’ Civic AI).”** (Vol. II) **“The Fifty-Gates Democratic Permissions Threshold (Constitutional Admissibility for All Civic AI).”** Iteratively published in 2025 and 2026, this series introduced several novel arguments to the field: (1) **The Civic Digital “Visibility-First” Architectural Stack**: He was the first to propose a specific technical stack for government that prioritizes illumination (seeing) over governance (acting). (2) **A New Definitional Standard**: He originated the claim that non-agency is the only way to achieve “high fidelity” decision support that is safe for democracy and argues that **“Civic AI”** should be defined by its structural non-agency - reframing it from a subtype of AI into a distinct class of “public visibility infrastructure.” (3) **The Fifty-Gates Democratic Permissions Threshold**: He introduced this specific framework to determine whether an AI system is “constitutionally admissible” for public use based on its lack of autonomous agency. He proposed that only a certified non-agentive **U.S. Civic Digital Visibility System** be permitted to directly serve the U.S. government at all levels.

His influential essay, **“Our AI Alignment Imperative: Creating a Future Worth Sharing”** (published by “The Humanist” on Oct. 23, 2025) challenged the traditional view of AI alignment as a purely technical control problem and reframed it as a structural and ethical necessity for human visibility and governance. (His work is available online, and at university, state, and local libraries, and the Library of Congress.)

Historical Writing and Regional History Community Education (Public, Museum, Televised, and Academic Presentations): He has received nine historical book awards for his biographies. His work has explored the local, state, and regional leadership of past American innovators in over 35 states, with a focus spanning education, government, transportation, banking, medicine, the military, the arts, and hospitality. Presentations included: Ohio Academy of History in 2026 (**“Civic Digital Visibility First: A Conditional Welcome to Our Emerging Civic AI, Supporting 2500 Years of Democratic Evolution”**); Wake Co. (NC) Genealogical Society in 2023 (**“Recovering the Lost Stories of Our Communities’ Early Leaders”**); Society of Appalachian Historians in 2018 (**“Early Progressive Health Reforms in Western NC”**); Burke Co. (NC) Board of Commissioners (via Local Cable TV), and the NC Museum of History Docents in 2016 (**“History of the Rosenwald Schools of Burke Co., NC: A Memorial Dedication”**).

Published Historical Biographies (Local, State and Regional American Leaders of the 19th and Early 20th Centuries):
Eastern and Midwestern U.S. History, and Canadian History (Educational, Religious, and Governmental):

“The Alsatian Bieber (Beaver) Family: German – American Educational and Mainline Protestant Leaders ...” (2022 NCSH Book Award)

Appalachian History (African-American, Educational, and Religious):

“The Last Rosenwald School of Burke County, North Carolina: An Historic Gem Recognized” (2016 NCSH Excellence Award)

Southern, Mid-Atlantic, and New England History (Civil War, Reconstruction Politics, and Fine Arts):

“Esley Hunt and Joshua P. Andrews: Among the South’s Best Civil War Portraitists” (TN, MA, NC) (2025 NCSH Excellence Award)

New South Builders: “William Johnston: Carolina Railroad King” (2020 NCSH Book Award). **“Carolinian Robertsons: The Family of Adjutant General T. R. Robertson of Winnsboro, SC, and Charlotte and Raleigh, NC”** (2023 NCSH Book Award). **“Railroad Builders: The Dunavant Family of VA, NC, and TN”** (2015 NCSH Book Award). **“Health and Hospitality: Dr. and Mrs. Charles Washington Hunt of Western NC”** (2018 NCSH Book Award). **“Full Steam Ahead: The Family of Brigadier General Charles Lutterloh and Eliza Comerford Lutterloh of Central and Eastern NC”** - introducing Esley Hunt, Early Photographer. (2018 NCSH Book Award).

Commentary: Confederate Statues: Chris recommended that our public leaders *lawfully* move Confederate statues to more appropriate settings. His personal opinion is that such statues add little to the historical record, understandably offend African-Americans, and diminish public support for historical institutions. (In North Carolina, this was published in the “Charlotte Observer” of 8-22-2017, the “Wilmington Star News” of 8-26-2017, and the “Fayetteville Observer” of 8-30-2017.) He respects differing opinions.

(Photo: Televised Unveiling of the Rosenwald Schools Memorial of Burke County, NC, on Nov. 1, 2016)

